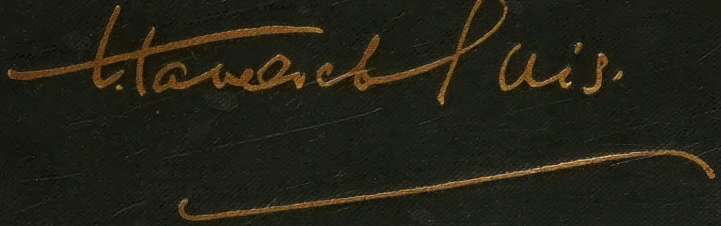

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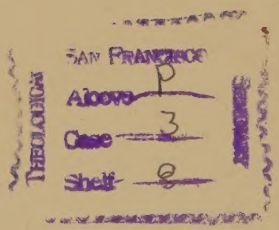

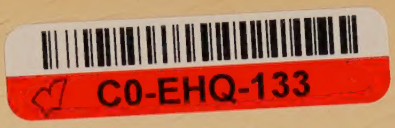
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HAVELOCK ELLIS

Philosopher of Love

By Houston Peterson

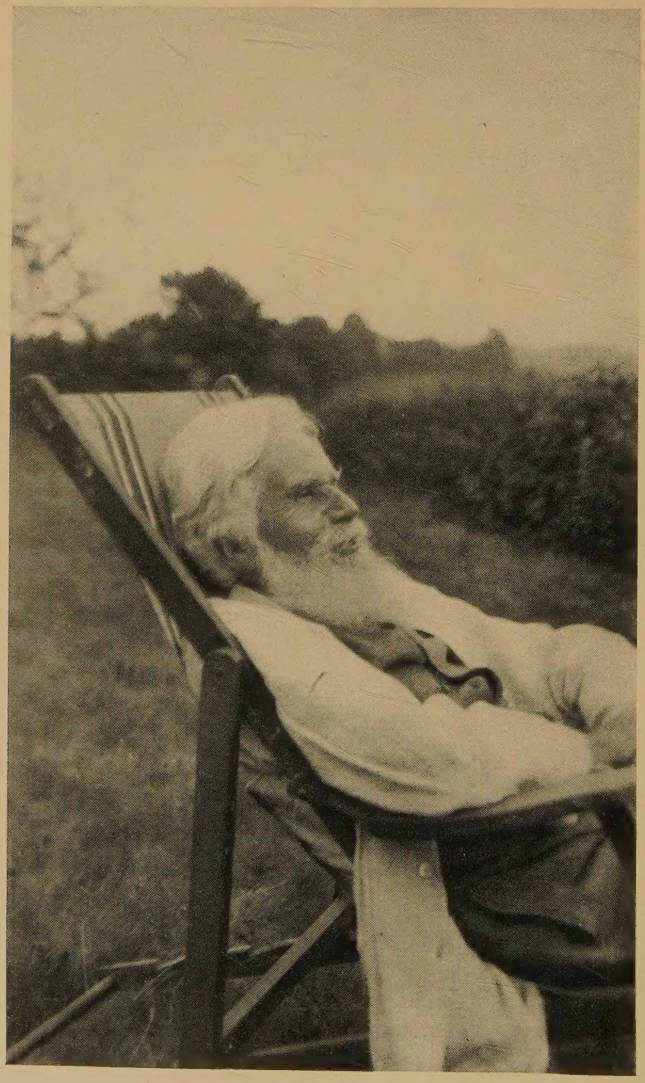
In an age bewildered about religion, overawed by science, and obsessed with sex, Havelock Ellis stands alone, a great scientist, psychologist, and writer whose serene philosophy has brought consolation to thousands.

In 'Havelock Ellis, Philosopher of Love,' Mr. Peterson has painted a full-length portrait of a remarkable man. Step by step Ellis's intellectual development is traced, through his early years as a typical Victorian, his four years' pilgrimage in Australia, where the important decisions of his life were made, the return to England, his arduous medical training, and his long literary career.

In preparing this work, Mr. Peterson had the constant coöperation of Havelock Ellis himself, with whom he spent many hours, and the use of quantities of early documents not previously accessible. His book is not only a stimulating biography of one of the great figures of our times but also a candid and immensely interesting analysis of the whole modern sex movement.

HAVELOCK ELLIS

Philosopher of Love



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HAVELOCK ELLIS

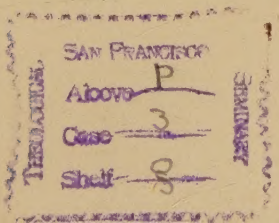
Philosopher of Love

BY

HOUSTON PETERSON

With Illustrations

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1928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TO
CHARLOTTE

PREFACE

With only the slightest knowledge of Havelock Ellis, I read, some years ago, his volume of essays *Affirmations*, which drew me steadily from one volume to another, through the whole range of his writings. I found that he was peculiarly aware of the motives and problems of his age and yet strangely free from its characteristic poisons and panaceas. He was modern, indeed ultra-modern, but at the same time ancient in spirit, a critic who did not confuse classicism with 'immaculate perception' nor sophistication with fatigue. He expressed audacities in no raucous voice and wrote no lamentations of man's miserable lot in a hostile world. If one word more than any other gave color to his reflections, it was *serenity*, and serenity seemed to be his possession rather than his need.

In the field of sex psychology, where Ellis had done his special work and become a supreme authority, I found that he avoided the methods of both the prude and the procurer — who have so much in common. He insisted on the enormous importance of erotic activities, but saw clearly that they formed only one figure in the elaborate dance of life. It was, for me, refreshing and surprising to discover a scholar who could devote himself so intensely to this precarious subject, without losing the fine perspective.

At first sight Ellis's writings fall into two distinct groups: the more literary books, such as *The New Spirit*, *Affirmations*, *The Soul of Spain*, and *The Dance of Life*; the more scientific works, such as *The Criminal*, *Man and Woman*, *A Study of British Genius*, and *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. This division is artificially emphasized by the fact that the first group is

brought out by general publishers, whereas the studies in sex are handled exclusively by a medical publishing house, the F. A. Davis Company of Philadelphia. Consequently, many readers of Ellis's essays have never even seen his books on sex, and students of the latter often do not know that he is a literary figure of great importance. This is unfortunate because the two aspects of his work are so beautifully complementary.

In the fall of 1923 I outlined a comprehensive essay on Ellis. In the summer of 1925 I met Mr. Ellis for the first time and spent several hours with him. The following November I started work on a small critical volume which was to have some such title as *The Themes of Havelock Ellis*, or, *In the Mind of Havelock Ellis*. After some months I informed him of my project and asked certain questions, to which he gave very illuminating answers. Then, in the summer of 1926, I went again to London where I enjoyed many conversations with Mr. Ellis at his home in Brixton and in the neighborhood of the British Museum. Early in our association he casually turned over to me a packet of juvenile notes on books he had read, which showed clearly his mental outlook at sixteen. Day after day he extracted from an old trunk more documents which he had not seen for fifty years, and as the material accumulated I found that my small monograph was expanding into a story of the development of a genius.

This book is based mainly on: (1) the published writings of Havelock Ellis, (2) quantities of unpublished notes written in his youth, (3) numerous conversations, (4) more than sixty personal letters to me, (5) a long list of written answers to specific questions, (6) a forty-six-page commentary on the next to the last

revision of my manuscript. It is obvious, therefore, that my debt to Mr. Ellis is immeasurable, and without his constant sympathy and coöperation I could have made little progress.

I am also deeply obligated to his sister, Miss Louie Ellis, who gave me much information regarding his childhood; to the late Dr. J. Barker Smith who went to medical school with Mr. Ellis and saw him frequently during nearly half a century; to Mr. Percival Chubb who also met Mr. Ellis often in the 80's; to Mr. Edward Carpenter with whom I had one memorable conversation; and to Mrs. Margaret Sanger and Madame Françoise Cyon, both close friends of Mr. Ellis for many years. The account of the Bedborough trial, which Mr. Ellis considers definitive, is based on information received from Mr. George Bedborough and particularly from Mr. Henry Seymour, the organizer of the Defense Committee. To Dr. Isaac Goldberg I am indebted for his pioneer work, *Havelock Ellis: A Biographical and Critical Survey*, published in the spring of 1926.

Among various patient friends who have been constantly helpful with criticism of my growing chapters, I must mention Mr. Angel Flores, Mr. Thomas Munro, Mrs. Charlotte Peterson, and Mr. John Storck. Dr. Robert L. Dickinson, of the Committee on Maternal Health, kindly went over the entire manuscript, and Mr. Bartlet Brebner read the larger part of it. Mr. Flores also did much work on the detailed bibliography and corrected all the proofs.

Finally, I must acknowledge the courtesy of the F. A. Davis Company and of Houghton Mifflin Company in allowing me to quote generously from the works of Havelock Ellis.

HOUSTON PETERSON

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HAVELOCK ELLIS

CHAPTER I

SUSANNAH MARY WHEATLEY'S SON

> On the 2d inst., at 1, St. John's-grove, Croydon, the wife of Mr. Edward P. Ellis, of a son.

THE proud father read this succinct notice in Singapore some months after it appeared in the 'Births' column of the London *Times* for February 5, 1859. At once he called together the officers of his ship and they drank in champagne the health of his son and heir. When he returned home to Croydon, an old town ten miles south of London Bridge, the following January, his wife presented him with 'a fine fat boy, nearly a year old,' who had been christened Henry Havelock Ellis.

In September, 1855, the young Captain Ellis married his distant cousin, Susannah Mary Wheatley, who was then twenty-five, three years his junior. The following February he sailed for Hong Kong and did not return to England until January, 1858. Four months later he commanded the barque Constance, with one hundred and fifty girl-emigrants on board, destined for Tasmania. During the voyage he ended an epidemic of hysteria, not by psychoanalysis, but by placing buckets of water on deck and threatening to drench the first culprit. Of those young women 'I took the greatest care, you may be sure,' he wrote in his autobiography, 'and landed them all to their entire satisfaction and also to that of the Emigration Commissioners.' He

thence proceeded to Singapore, where he was ordered to load in Borneo for England. On crossing the China Sea the Constance sprung a leak and went back to Singapore for repairs. And it was there that the captain first learned of his son's birth from the note in the *Times*.

Mrs. Ellis was then living in a small semi-detached house built of the hard gray flint common to the district around Croydon. In one of those low-ceilinged rooms she gave birth to her first child and only son at eight-thirty on a Wednesday morning, at the end of a cold tempestuous night — eight months before the publication of *The Origin of Species*, the beginning of the newer dispensation. It was a successful, normal delivery, although forceps were required because of the infant's large head. A few weeks later he was taken to the old parish church at the end of the street and baptized.

Always the chief interest of his lonely mother, he absorbed her attention completely during his first three and a half years. In that period the captain was home for only a few months and the elder daughter was not born until 1862. Perhaps this is the key to Havelock Ellis's feminine tenderness which combines so subtly with his robust intellect. Perhaps it was the early relation with his mother, like the infancy of Leonardo, which makes him remind us of the Renaissance saint. Ellis himself believes that his nature comes almost entirely from his mother.

Had Susannah Wheatley been reared by her own mother, Havelock Ellis would have probably been a very different man. Grandmother Wheatley was a vain, luxurious, and fascinating lady, well educated and well spoiled, given to playing the harp and painting china, the honored mistress of a fashionable girls'

school near London. In the first year of her marriage she persuaded her dashing husband, on the very eve of a voyage, to give up the sea for life. Her dresses, jewels, feather tippets, and laces were of the first quality. She sat up all night before her wedding in order not to ruin a special coiffure, and it is reported that she wore a new pair of gloves to church every Sunday. In order to tighten her corsets she was accustomed to loop the lacings over the bedposts, a baneful habit which may have caused her early death when giving birth to a third child.

Consequently Susannah was untouched by her mother's brilliant example, but instead was exposed to the dubious tenderness of a stepmother and stepsister who dampened her volatile nature. At seventeen this growing seriousness crystallized in her conversion to Evangelicalism from which she was never diverted. In the tradition of John Wesley, she felt deeply the need of redemption through Jesus Christ and was quite indifferent to the rationalistic elements in religion. She lived soberly, if not ascetically. She dressed very simply, without any particular style, disliked jewelry and thought 'ear-rings as barbaric as nose-rings.' Her convictions forbade the theatre, and alcoholic beverage was not served at her board. She was always exceedingly rigid about family prayers, and on Sundays attended both morning and evening services. She was of the large, matronly type, with a head of striking auburn hair which seemed to belie her placid features. Shy, reserved, dignified, the essential point about her was her 'force of character' which was all the more effective because she was not herself aware of it. She considered it her duty as a parent to discipline the children severely at the beginning and not to soften them by fondling and petting; thus, in a small way, the head of the household

could imitate the impersonal justice of God. As a result she won the profound reverence and affection of her children, but not their warm, intimate confidence.

Henry's early history was quite ordinary and human. After being the sole companion of his mother for nearly four years, he resented at first the invasion of his infant sister, Mary, whom he dubbed 'a little bit of dirt and rubbish,' but soon he became devoted to her and enjoyed the rôle of guardian. In an experimental spirit he once threw his shoes into the fire. On another occasion he refused to walk with his mother, but calmly stood in the middle of the road for some minutes, while she stood over him like a patient divinity. An excellent picture of him, taken at the age of four, discloses a stocky youngster, remarkably composed, exceedingly sober, and a little lonely.

A year later a second daughter arrived, and Mrs. Ellis moved her growing family to Cherry Orchard Road in another part of Croydon. More a sailor by inheritance than her husband, with more natural initiative, she resented inwardly so confined, isolated a life and sought adventure in pathetically modest directions. Her favorite sport was house-hunting, justified on the theory that no one should live more than three or four years in the same place. Occasionally the returning captain had difficulty in finding his own home. Before he was sixteen, Henry had lived at five different addresses, and thereby acquired, in a small way, an independence of mere physical location which helped to destroy the static, provincial outlook. In old age he does not remain in one place, but moves during the year between London, Cornwall, France, and Buckinghamshire.

Cherry Orchard Road is the scene of Ellis's earliest recollections. He still recalls his delight in watching

their next-door neighbor, Robert Barnes, busy at work with palette and brush. Barnes later attained a well-merited reputation with his pleasant scenes of domestic life and could have affected deeply the budding taste of the receptive boy. One of Henry's chief amusements was to recognize his work, in the contemporary magazines, without referring to the 'R. B.' in the corner, and it was an edition of Mrs. Barbauld's hymns, illustrated by Barnes and presented by the artist himself, that Henry always cherished as his first book.

A more deep-seated impression was left on his mind by the powerful genius of Thomas Rowlandson, an eighteenth-century illustrator now too often forgotten. Combining the epic ease of Dickens in the *Pickwick Papers* with the graphic fury of Hogarth, he set down the whole life of his period in a series of notable volumes. A copy of the most successful, *Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*, came down to the Ellis household from the library of Grandmother Wheatley and was pored over by Henry throughout his childhood. He also delighted in reproductions of the old masters (some tinted in water-colors by his grandfather Ellis), in the *Penny Magazine* — more invigorating fare, certainly, than the deadly 'picture-books,' most children are subject to. In this way began Ellis's livelong interest in plastic art; when he started to visit the galleries at fifteen, his eyes were already accustomed to examining pictures minutely.

The outstanding event of his childhood, occurring between his seventh and eighth years, was a voyage around the world in the full-rigged ship Empress, captained by his father. Sailing from the Indian Docks, London, they were boarded at Queenstown, Ireland, by a company of priests and nuns, headed by two bishops, dedicated to missionary work in Australia. One of the

nuns, a certain Sister Agnes, had the unsuspected privilege of giving young Ellis his earliest formal lessons. She was also the object of his first recorded æsthetico-sexual judgment — he considered her 'very pretty.' His other chief friend of the voyage was an intelligent German steward who showed him books of natural history handsomely illustrated, and in the ship's library he found tales of Hans Christian Andersen and Captain Marryat's *Masterman Ready*.

Across the equator, around the cape, fled the Empress, and the boy came into his heritage. More than a glorious adventure, the voyage was a mighty ritual making him one with his seagoing ancestors, one with the mariners of England. The two guns mounted on the main deck recalled the tales told about his grandfather Wheatley, who had been captured by the French during the Napoleonic wars. Mrs. Ellis's only brother had sailed away and never been heard of again. Her paternal grandfather was a shipbuilder of Durham. The son of an official on the London docks, Captain Ellis himself went to sea when he was fourteen and was master of his own vessel at twenty-eight. Such facts, bare in the telling, now became a vital part of Henry's Odyssey.

In these months also Henry began to appreciate his father's qualities more definitely and perhaps to take him as a model. The captain was urbane, easy-going, generous to the point of carelessness, and devoid of any very rigid opinions. He always went to church with Mrs. Ellis when at home, but it is likely that he was an agnostic. He read Pope's poetry, sang fairly well, and kept a concertina in his cabin. He preferred civilian broadcloth to the officer's serge, and with his stylish top-hat was often taken for a prosperous landsman. In Australian ports the dinners and dances that he

gave on board were celebrated. Yet these qualities did not prevent him from being an able captain who passed through many storms without losing a ship and once brought a smouldering cargo safely into harbor. In a word, he possessed that moderation which marks the whole Ellis family. They observe the Greek virtue naturally and without effort, with no need of a tight rein. They do not oscillate between extremes or have to win terrible battles over themselves continually. They move in the middle way. This characteristic flowers in Havelock Ellis's serene anarchism, which is simply 'a sort of innate conviction that healthy and well-born people do not need restraint.' This conviction he feels to be in his blood, although he realizes that it is not found in every one. The point not to overlook, however, is that Ellis has exercised his moderation, not amid the conventions of the crowd but at a rather more advanced outpost.

After four months without touching land the Empress reached the beautiful harbor of Sydney and for a few days the boy was able to 'wander round that Circular Quay which seems to lie at the heart of Mr. Conrad's world.' [1] This was the happy prelude of his return to Australia ten years later for that long stay which was to encompass the most important crises of his life. From Australia they headed straight across the South Pacific to the coast of Peru, for a load of guano. While the crew packed in tons of the famous fertilizer, their youngest shipmate paddled about in a dinghy, looking for starfish, or played house on deck with the small daughter of another captain. With the ship finally anchored in the port of Callao, historically prominent since the days of Pizarro and Drake, notorious for its filth in later times, Henry went with his

[1] *The Philosophy of Conflict*, 247.

father to spend a wonderful day in Lima, the capital of Peru. Of this important event he wrote forty-two years later: 'It was the first great foreign city I had seen, and the unfamiliar features of its streets, such as elsewhere have become so familiar to me — the huge gateways, the pleasant courtyards one looked into beyond — made an ineffaceable impression on my mind. It has since seemed to me a fact not without significance that this first glimpse of the non-Anglo-Saxon world should have been of a foreign city founded on those Spanish traditions which have since been so attractive to me, so potent to thrill or to charm.' [1]

From Peru the Empress proceeded around Cape Horn and across the Atlantic to Antwerp. There Henry touched the continent of Europe for the first time, and Belgium was to be the scene of his first continental explorations sixteen years later. This contact was made notable by a circus, although he remembered 'The Descent from the Cross' by Rubens when he came back on the second visit particularly to study Rubens and the early Flemish school.

At home again in time to speculate on the birth of a third baby sister, Henry entered a small school for boys, directed by a capable Mrs. Granville along the lines of Pestalozzi. She saved him from the cramping patterns of conventional education which was then little concerned with the natural development of the child. She also made group-dancing a part of the regular programme, and so acquainted him with that fundamental art which became a favorite theme of his later life. But even Mrs. Granville could not break down his extreme shyness or turn him into a gay, lively play-fellow — capable of defending himself with normal boyish fists. One day he came home with a prominent

[1] *The Soul of Spain*, v.

hole in the back of his neck, which was made, his mother learned through questioning him persistently, by a sharp slate-pencil in the hands of one of his humorous comrades. Indignantly she said, 'I hope you paid him back,' to which Henry replied, 'No, for then I should have been as bad as he was.' Certainly an odd remark for a boy to make, but perfectly characteristic of Ellis, who has always been lacking in the ordinary traits of pugnacity and anger. He was not even competitive or English enough to be interested in the school games and only played them as a matter of routine. During a long career he has engaged in but one actual controversy,[1] and apparently has made no personal enemies, a striking contrast to his friend Freud, who has seldom been out of a battle and considers a hated enemy indispensable to his emotional health.[2] It is apropos of Freud that Ellis writes, 'Why indeed should one ever be hostile? What a vain thing is this hostility!'[3] thus admitting in himself an extraordinary deficiency which is the obverse of his most valued quality, a serene and disinterested outlook.

In Henry's eighth year bumps of mechanical genius were found on his head by a phrenologist, but no one since has been able to confirm the discovery. Mrs. Ellis played the piano as did all good Victorian ladies who had the proper admiration for Handel, and made quantities of 'fancy-work,' but generally speaking she was unskilful with her hands; in fact her one achievement as a seamstress was 'a canary-colored frock with narrow velvet ribbons' for her only son. Like his mother he has never been distinguished for manual dexterity and is much impressed by a little of it in others.

[1] With Karl Pearson, concerning variation in man and woman.

[2] Cf. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, English trans., 384–85.

[3] *Impressions and Comments*, I, 123.

There is still a quaint awkwardness in some of his movements and gestures. He played the inevitable cricket mediocrely and it was difficult for him to catch the shuttlecock. His penmanship has not changed essentially since early adolescence, but it is not the more legible for that reason. Perhaps there was some truth in the early rumor that he used a trained spider to write with. One of his later teachers simply said, 'You have a hand of your own, my boy.' Such maladroitness is common to highly sensitive individuals and often marks the man of intellectual genius.

In Ellis this condition seems to have been furthered by a confused ambidexterity. He bowled with his left hand and always threw with his left and was probably left-handed by nature, but was taught to hold the pen and perform other acts with his right hand. The consequent development of both sides of the brain may have been largely responsible for his wide mental outlook and aversion to dogmatism. Of course the specific answers to such questions are still hidden in the obscure corners of physiological psychology, but it is legitimate to suspect some casual connection between such analogous tendencies in the same nervous organism.

After three or four terms in the beneficent hands of Mrs. Granville, Henry entered the 'French and German College' at Merton, which he attended until twelve. It is worth mentioning for the one important fact that there he began the study of French under good auspices, as the head of the school, a Mr. de Chastelain, was of French parentage. This early grounding led to rapid progress in the language, a vast acquaintance with French literature while yet in his teens, and a continued devotion to it throughout his life, with the result that he is more akin intellectually to Montaigne, Diderot, Renan, Flaubert, and Remy de

Gourmont than to any of his countrymen. Like those classic Frenchmen, Ellis has developed a lucid, dissolving mind, content with an æsthetic justification of existence and he possesses an ethical elasticity which is almost wholly un-English. To France he has gone year after year to enjoy what he considers the ultimate fruits of western civilization. To-day one of his closest friends is a French woman and he will often be seen with a new French novel or volume of poems, the current number of *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* or *La Nouvelle Revue Française*. The French strain in Ellis's development can hardly be overestimated.

Yet, it must be said, this is not at all his own view of the matter. 'I regard myself as intensely English,' he writes, 'and do not consider that the immense fascination which the French mind has for me involves *affinity*. Arthur Symons, who is totally unlike me, regards himself as French in spirit, and perhaps rightly.'

Ellis is accustomed to lay great stress on heredity and has a right to be proud of his unusually pure English blood, flowing deep from the soil of Suffolk. His great-grandfather Ellis, a corn merchant and draper, migrated to London after marrying into the old Peppen family, which had settled in Suffolk for several centuries and contributed numerous clergymen to the Church of England. The son married a mild Miss Gray from the Isle of Wight, who gave birth in 1827 to Edward Peppen Ellis, Havelock Ellis's father. On the other hand, Havelock Ellis's mother was also a Peppen, her mother's mother being a sister of her husband's father's mother — to express the relation simply. She was directly related to the Havelocks of Durham, who produced the famous Sir Henry Havelock, hero of the Indian Mutiny. Thus Havelock Ellis's descent is almost entirely free from Scotch, Irish, Welsh, or Cor-

nish elements, but is chiefly old Danish and Scandinavian, crossed by the French strain of the original Peppens. It is a vigorous, substantial line, distinguished by pilots of souls and pilots of ships.

All such facts may help to explain his large-boned physique and beauty of countenance, but there is no spiritual alchemy which will actually help us to deduce his spacious mind from his estimable ancestry. Whether one goes to the extremes of psychoanalysis or behaviorism, it seems more fruitful to account for specific mental characteristics in terms of the conditioning features of the subject's environment rather than by a vague appeal to the immortal germ-plasm. Hence, the fact that young Havelock Ellis was steeped in French literature between his tenth and twentieth years, and devoted to it afterwards, accounts largely for the color of his mind.

At ten Henry began his first notebook and diary, which was rather childish. He was not at all precocious and gave little indication of his future powers. He was in appearance, at least, simply a quiet boy who did his lessons, took an undistinguished part in the games of his school-fellows and loved to be with his mother. There was also living with them an elderly Miss Johnston, formerly a teacher in Grandmother Wheatley's school, who helped Mrs. Ellis to teach him to play the piano. The even life of the household was broken on a few memorable occasions when Mrs. Ellis gathered up one or two of the children, took a nurse and hurried off to Hamburg, Antwerp, or Hull, to await the coming of her husband's ship. Then for a few months the captain was a delightful visitor in his own home. His tales always enchanted the children, although they were a little jealous of him for monopolizing their mother, usurping her place at family prayers and carving, and going off

with her on 'honeymoons' to the seaside. So harmonious and affectionate was the relationship between the parents during their rare meetings that Henry never witnessed those horrible domestic squabbles by which the sensitive young soul can be thoroughly embittered.

All in all, it was a gentle, religious home by which Havelock Ellis was reared. Of various concrete incidents that he or his sisters now recall from those early years, most of them have some religious association. He often held a miniature service on rainy days when Mrs. Ellis went to church alone. For a drowned rat he carried out a dignified funeral ceremony. Together they gave highly dramatic readings of favorite Bible stories. At Antwerp once they were astonished when Mrs. Ellis delayed family prayers for a few moments so that they could watch some marching soldiers. On another occasion, in going to the seashore, Henry carried as luggage in his pocket a bottle of ink and a New Testament, with the result that the holy book and the trousers were ruined. His maiden literary effort, at about eleven, was called 'The Precious Stones of the Bible,' a kind of anthology in which he included the high points of Biblical prose and poetry. At church, Sunday after Sunday, he hung on the devout Irish eloquence of the Reverend J. C. Erck, and resolved to follow in His train. Later young Ellis passed far beyond the naïve dogmas of Evangelicalism, but he remained a religious pilgrim, a quiet worshipper in the cathedral of the world.

In March, 1916, as his memory swept back nearly fifty years, Ellis set down the following prose-poem, a delicate summary of his long career:

'*In cælo quies.* I used to be taken as a boy to the ancient church at Merton where the Irish vicar, unknown to fame but the most genuinely eloquent of

preachers, would pour forth the extravagant flood of a simple and unrestrained emotion that never toppled over into absurdity, and his beautiful and flexible voice would breathe forth the evening prayers as though they were a new song that had never been uttered before, and from the pulpit rise with thunder that filled the twilight church and then sink to a whisper, while the Anglo-Saxon villagers sat in stolidly devout indifference, so that out of all his congregation perhaps only one truly heard, and he a little boy whose eyes would be fascinated by the old helmet suspended over the reading desk or wandering on the wall near him to the marble tablet set up by the widow of Captain Cook, or become fixed on the row in the nave vaulting of painted escutcheons, on one of which, above all, for some reason the motto appealed to him: *In cælo quies.*

'*In cælo quies.* He knew what the words meant, but he could not know that they constitute a strange Christian motto and hold a significance deeper than any special religious faith, the last aspiration of men for whom life has been a battle, and the earth a scene of turmoil without and agitation within, as in the end life and the earth are for all of us, so that in this profound ejaculation they summed up the Vision of Rest, the Heaven which for Monk and Agnostic remains the same: *In cælo quies.*

'*In cælo quies.* Again and again through the troubled course of life on earth, when the heart is torn by its own pain, or the pain of the hearts it loves, or the pain of the whole world, I see that escutcheon aloft, and the benediction of that old saying softly falls: *In cælo quies.*' [1]

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 94–96.

CHAPTER II

LIFE IS VERY EARNEST

In early adolescence, between twelve and the end of his fifteenth year, Henry's general point of view did not change, but his encyclopædic curiosity and passion for classification developed while he read as widely as his poor library facilities permitted. He also began frequent visits to art galleries which established the habit of precise observation and inspired his pioneer reflections on the problems of nudity. At best he was a serious youth, apparently destined for an honorable career in a conservative church. At worst he was a sententious, unworldly little prig too much concerned with God and duty.

In the summer of 1871 a charming girl of sixteen, distantly related to his mother, visited at the home in Merton. She was much in the company of the reticent, worshipful boy. On parting they exchanged books, but met no more because their mothers ceased to be friendly. For a long time she glowed in his memory and at last became the theme of a wistful, juvenile lyric.

> 'I think of all these things:
> The cornfields and the August air,
> The music that was in your speech,
> The purple that was on your hair.'

In his twelfth year also he left the French and German College and entered as a weekly boarder a somewhat exclusive school at Mitcham. The principal, Grover by name, was a tall man with a genial Socratic countenance, a blind eye, a very bald head, and a long gray beard. He was a competent teacher along old-

fashioned lines, but his chief claim to immortality was a versified attack on Darwinism which had to be removed from the railroad stands because of coarseness. Of much more benefit to Henry was the French tutor, Joseph Stevens, who carried on with Henry the good work started by de Chastelain. Stevens evidently loved teaching and was not only interesting in the classroom, but was generous in loaning to the boys books from his own library. They were frequently surprised to find how many translations from other languages he had hidden away besides his French volumes. Privately he gave Henry his first grounding in German, while Henry started Italian by himself.

Yet more significant than any record of his formal schooling is a worn and faded little book with 'H. H. Ellis 1871,' written on the fly-leaf. The title-page reads: 'On Self-Education and the Formation of Character, Addressed to the Young, by Mrs. Hope, 1843.' At the back are the words 'very good. H. H. Ellis, 1871' and below, 'Reread 2/9/72.' It is a solemn little Encheiridion quite free from the heavy Philistinism of Smiles's *Duty* and *Self-Help*. The main divisions deal with the acquisition of knowledge, the formation of opinions, and the government of the moral feelings. In order that the mind may be developed and the precepts properly observed, constant self-examination is required. Such advice for the young may now appear somewhat questionable, but Henry read the book twice with pleasure and tried to follow its injunctions, thus beginning his great work of self-education. A few years hence he was to be fascinated by that epic of self-education, *Wilhelm Meister*, which throughout life has remained his favorite novel.

As there were few books in the home his chief source of information was some old files of *The Penny Maga-*

zine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, dating back thirty or forty years, which had been taken by his grandfather Ellis. He himself was able to buy, very cheaply, antiquated copies of *The Visitor, or Monthly Instructor*, through the 'Exchange and Mart,' a valuable newspaper medium for buying and selling almost anything. In a day of pretentious and expensive outlines of existence one may feel inclined to smile at these faded old volumes with their poor printing, double columns, and quaint woodcuts, but on examination they prove to be mines of diverse information, carefully selected. Besides popular articles on scientific subjects, notable art works, natural history, eminent men, foreign countries, and the like, the pages are enriched by lengthy quotations from the classic writers. Along with *The Visitor* and *The Penny Magazine*, other domestic periodicals such as *Sunday at Home*, *The Mirror* and *The Christian Witness*, an inspiring compilation called *The Art of Doing Our Best* and Macaulay's essays made up the bulk of Henry's general reading for a year or two. He classified it, for future reference, in an 'Index Rerum' of more than two hundred items, extending from air-beds and Chinese amusements to weeds and wild-flowers. *The Visitor* was cited one hundred and seventeen times, *The Penny Magazine* twenty times. Dated May 23, 1872, this dilapidated little 'Reference Book' was prophetic of Ellis's wide-ranging explorations in the field of knowledge.

From the same year there is a mass of loose notes which might have been intended for a first psychological treatise. 'Longevity' is one of the principal topics, with several lists of old men, some suggestions as to how to live to a ripe age, and a score of illustrative clippings from the newspapers. On a separate slip is the statement that 'Early rising conduces to longevity

as does music.' There is also a collection of notes on the virtues and methods of early rising. Anticipating more definitely his later interests are a number of comments, taken from periodicals and conventional poetry, on eyes, smiles, blushing and lips. During the Christmas holidays of 1872 he carefully copied, into a notebook of two hundred and fifty pages, quotations under five headings — Memory, Flowers, Dreams, Sleep, and The Ocean. Half a century later, in *Impressions and Comments*, he returns again and again to precisely the same themes.

On the 16th of April, 1873, Henry began a long series of notes on 'Books I Have Read' which were continued until October, 1876. Most of them merely state the substance of his reading and need not be reproduced, but they also contain many personal reflections, concrete indications of his mental growth which are especially revealing because they were only intended for his own eyes. Such passages may be presented almost without commentary, as one of the most interesting youthful records that has ever fallen into the hands of a biographer.

The series starts off with a few words on the best-seller of Charlotte Mary Yonge, who helped along the Oxford Movement and contributed a hundred volumes to the moral enlightenment of England: 'While at Hastings I read the "Heir of Redclyffe" which is interesting and shows intimate acquaintance with human nature. I could have wished it to come to an end at the marriage of Guy and Annabel. The last half is very affective and mournful, containing some of the most affective passages I ever remembered to have read although illness may have made me more susceptible of being affected. The conclusion, however, of Marryat's "King's Men" which I read about the same time is

very touching, and almost unexpected, but the book itself in my idea is one of the pleasantest of Marryat's although there is far too little about the hero and the style is rambling, which I rather like in Marryat at least.' As Henry was little drawn to the activities of his schoolmates and had a much more intense inner life of his own, he found his realities largely among books, literally living with their characters and making them his models. He hoped that he might be influenced by the 'noble rectitude and disregard of self' of Isa Grattan, a figure in *Rescued from Egypt* and *Triumph Over Midian*, two popular stories by 'a Lady of England.'

'Just finished Mrs. Jameson's "Essays on the Lives of Remarkable Painters" (18/4/73), which I have read at intervals for about 6 weeks. It is very interesting and to me entirely new. It has greatly increased my taste for pictures and desire to travel. She appears very enthusiastic. I do not know whether her estimates are correct or not.' Partly under the inspiration of Mrs. Jameson, Henry paid his first visit to the National Gallery some two or three months later.

'Just read (21/4/73) Shakespere's (I have decided to spell it thus, as there is as much authority for this mode as any other, and I do not see the need of adding an a, Shakespeare seems out of fashion) "Cymbeline." I like it very much, it is very interesting, but I do not yet feel the enthusiasm for Shakespere, the lavish praise bestowed upon him made me expect. Perhaps Coriolanus and Cymbeline, the only two plays of his I have read, are not favourable for producing such an effect. I think however when I know more of him I shall be more able to appreciate him.'

What Henry could appreciate thoroughly at this time was anything that had to do with the Bible or the

Christian religion. 'I have just commenced,' he wrote in May, 'taking in monthly numbers Cassell's "Bible Educator" edited by Professor Plumptre, a way of spending money far more to my state and infinitely more interesting (not to speak of its instructiveness) than the way in which boys usually spend their money. I am very much pleased with it. It is contributed to by such writers as Dr. Payne Smith, Canon Rawlinson, Rev. Dr. Ginsberg, Dr. Stainer and many others equally capable of writing on the various subjects treated of such as history of the Sacred Scriptures, history of the English version, allusions to Bible history in coins. Zoölogy of the Bible, Botany of the Bible, Music of the Bible, Poetry of the Bible, etc. Although not written for the student it is certainly not exclusively for the lower classes as Greek, Hebrew and Latin quotations are continually coming up.'

Among various books read in June, Henry was much impressed by *The Transformation* of Hawthorne (the title for the edition of *The Marble Faun*, published in England), 'which may be said to be the first of his I have read, although I have a very dim idea of having read the Scarlet Letter — very dim idea indeed.' He enjoyed not the tale so much as the beautiful descriptions which made him long to be in Italy, but as usual the religious question comes in for major consideration. 'His views of the Roman Catholic Church are those of a great many and slightly modified they are my own. With the Romish Church is connected almost all that is beautiful in painting, music, sculpture, architecture and much in literature. It was besides the original Christian Church. There are many beautiful ideas embodied in it (perhaps Hawthorne rather exaggerates them) but it is a great mixture of error, truth and absurdity, the first greatly preponderating, and the errors

are deadly — so pernicious that to write in favour of the Romish Church involves a great responsibility.'

'Read two (29/6/73) small books of poems by Mr. MacKay which are made doubly interesting to me by the author being for the time English master at Mr. Grover's school. I like them very much, they are an imitation of Tennyson, have real poetry in them.' This Angus MacKay soon became Henry's first congenial friend and the most important feature of his school life, although some six or eight years older. His mother was English, his father a Scotch Highlander, who was at one time 'Royal Piper.' He published his two books of moderately good verse before he was twenty. His reading was broad, his critical judgment well developed, and he did not disdain, in academic fashion, the contemporary tendencies in literature. 'I cannot say,' Ellis has recently written, 'that MacKay had any influence in moulding me, and I had begun to write before I met him, but his value for me was immense. He was exactly the guide and liberator I needed. He opened for me a new world of life and thought, which I should in any case have found, but not under such auspicious circumstances or so easily and rapidly.' [1] The essential point is that MacKay opened for Ellis a new world at just that critical period, before his mind could crystallize in an orthodox pattern.

Earlier in the century young Charles Cowden Clark, the well-read son of a school principal, placed himself at the disposal of one John Keats, eight years younger, and in consequence an inexperienced groping genius quickly achieved an orientation which hostile circumstances might have permanently prevented. When Ellis went to Australia in 1875 for his long stay, MacKay was the only person outside of his family with

[1] I. Goldberg: *Havelock Ellis, A Biographical and Critical Survey*, 42–43.

whom he corresponded regularly, and it was MacKay who criticized meticulously many of his literary experiments before he began to publish. In the beginning of their relationship MacKay was of course much in advance of Ellis, but he developed little and by 1880 was being rapidly outgrown. He died in 1906 after a worthy career as clergyman in the Church of England. He and Ellis remained very good friends to the end, their most serious difference of opinion having to do with the merits of Jan Steen, whom Ellis ranked more highly.

MacKay was Ellis's first real friend. *After that early period all his most intimate friends have been women.*

To come back to 'Books I Have Read' and the summer of 1873, Henry is re-reading some of the poems by 'my favourite poet,' Longfellow. 'I never before knew how beautiful they,— especially many of the shortest are.— I suppose it is because I am getting older but now I like them very much and often read one of those short ones over and over again, liking it better each time. The chords which he strikes meet a response in my own heart which is not the case with most poetry I have read. Milton I have read but he is far above me standing dim and majestic. Shakespeare I can wonder at, admire, but he also stands far away from me and I can see him from afar, a monument of human genius but Longfellow I feel within me.'

'I am now (Aug. 1873) reading the Student's Hume, an English History founded on Hume but without his partiality, and I believe a very correct one. I am reading very slowly though, for as I am reading I put down questions which embrace a whole chapter (about twenty in a chapter). When I have finished the chapter I answer all the questions on paper and then write the whole chapter down in epitome and sometimes almost

word for word. I get through about one chapter a week in this way. The history I very much like.'

In September Henry read for the first time one of Carlyle's works, *Sartor Resartus*, 'kindly lent by Mr. Mackay, with whom Carlyle is a great favourite.' Enjoying both 'the grand flow of laughter and the originality of thought' he copied down in another little booklet a number of the most striking passages. Later on he was to read *Past and Present* and the *Life of Stirling*, evidently finding in Carlyle the same rich tonic dear to Tyndall, Huxley, and other great Victorians. For more obvious reasons he revelled at this time in Macaulay's eloquent essays, overflowing with specific information about Addison, Johnson, the Restoration dramatists, and a thousand other subjects. 'Macaulay is one of my favourites, perhaps almost my chief favourite although I am so entirely opposed to him in politics, still I find very little if anything in those essays not historical or political with which to disagree, and even in those essays which are historical and political I can hardly help agreeing with his remarks, so apparently true are they.' Incidentally it was on the last day of 1873 that he read for the second time Macaulay's essay on the comic dramatists of the Restoration.

'Received (Feb 1874) as a birthday present (at my own wish) Prof. H. Morley's First Sketch of English Literature with which I am thoroughly satisfied. It is a sort of work I have long wished to possess and this particular book is I believe the best of the kind and is throughout most trustworthy, most instructive, most interesting. I could wish him however to have said something more on Shakespeare's works. He gives us about 3 or four pages on Merchant of Venice and barely mentions others, only giving their supposed dates, with the exception of The Tempest. But I am thoroughly

satisfied with the work (of nearly 1,000 pages) and it is deeply interesting.'

'Read (Feb 21st) the "Gerusalemme Liberata" through the medium of a French translation kindly lent me by Monsieur Joseph Stevens. I have not read many French books — very few — but I can sincerely say I never before came across one I more thoroughly enjoyed or which on the whole presents fewer difficulties to surmount in reading.' He goes on to argue that the French language is ideally adapted not to poetry, but to poetic prose, and differs with Byron's dictum that Tasso's epic is equal to those of Homer, Dante and Milton. It is clear that by fifteen Henry had his French very well in hand and was almost ready to take up the most difficult writers.

'Read (March 2, 1874) the Aurora Leigh of England's greatest poetess Elizabeth Barrett Browning, (kindly lent me by Mr. MacKay) and seldom have I read a book by which I felt more raised, more elevated, ennobled, I know not what to call it — but call it what you will — it is a true and living book — written out of the poet's own life and heart and mind — it is her own mature convictions upon life and art and well worthy of being her masterpiece.' In this vein he expatiates for a thousand words, utterly carried away by Mrs. Browning's union of the ideal and practical life. Even his beloved Longfellow suffers by comparison. He prays that God will give him some slight part of that gift passing gold or silver, the noble power of translating the soul into words.

As a relief from so much spirituality Henry turned to 'The Song of Songs' which he did not consider a symbolic picture of Christ and the Church, but a great poem of passionate and pure love. 'It is full of charming touches of Nature. The similes are exceedingly

precise, almost too much so, though at times remarkably striking and appropriate. It achieves great charm from some little touches which it would not now be deemed proper to introduce. For instance it would hardly be deemed right now for anyone to compare his love's navel to "a round goblet which inviteth not liquor," or for her to say thus, "his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires." Again it has a somewhat sensuous sound to say, "His left hand should be under my head and his right hand should embrace me," but it is one of the prettiest touches in the poem and the naïveté with which it is said is charming.'

In those same weeks Henry was inspired to further moral reflection by his growing interest in art. Since paying his first visit to the National Gallery in the summer of 1873 he has gone constantly to exhibitions of painting and sculpture, frequently making detailed notes at the moment of observation or writing up his impressions a few hours afterward. Perhaps the first record of this kind was that composed on the 8th of April, 1874, the day of his third visit to the National Gallery. By that time he had come to the conclusion that nothing was so valuable for the culture of the imagination, after Nature and poetry, as 'the *study* of a *few* varied paintings of the first class.' He had a most decided preference for the Renaissance Italians, especially 'the divine Raphael,' whose Saint Catherine of Alexandria he could almost worship. What a devout expression, what wonderful colors, what graceful drapery! 'I have it all before me now, even to the plaits of the hair and the elegant fingernails.'

'. . . As usual I admire Turner; also Etty's The Female Bathing, Youth at the Helm and Pleasure at the Prow, and Two Females Surprising a Swain. In this last the little strips of transparent drapery floating

around the loins of the two girls appear fastidious, unnatural and rather ridiculous. But this, if it is a fault, is a very slight and unnoticeable one; a greater fault appears to me to be the warmth he gives to all his nude females. This is especially conspicuous in the Female Bathing. It is very pretty and slightly sensuous, but, I venture to say, hardly natural. In this respect Correggio appears to me to have come much nearer nature in the nude figure of Venus in Mercury Teaching Cupid the Alphabet. There are some of the old masters whose paintings, on the whole, I do not admire but I refrain from saying anything with regard to them as I know they are by masters who deservedly enjoy a great reputation and that if I cannot enjoy them I know that others can. This I think to be a perfectly safe and good and useful rule, and one which I always strive to adopt with regard to other things besides pictures.'

Remembering pleasantly the French pictures in the International Exhibition of the previous year, Henry went again this spring, 1874, but the French section was not yet open, and only a few historical and allegorical paintings interested him at all. Some statues justified the long fatiguing day and caused him to express himself elaborately for the first time on the dark mystery of sex. At this time Henry was barely fifteen, with no training in anatomy or physiology, reared in true Victorian fashion to abhor the low, sensuous roots of human nature, and there was nothing in his environment to make him have a broader view.

After commenting on a few pictures in the International Exhibition, he went on: 'There are very many beautiful sculptures — especially heads of females — scattered in the galleries. Ellen (of the Lady of the Lake) is a lovely female statue, life-size, very well executed, thoroughly simple and natural. Michael

Angelo — a handsome youth of sixteen meditating as to the faun he is sculpturing — is another true work of art and genius. Poetry is marked in every line of the beautiful statue. It is by an Italian. His hand holding the mallet is behind his back; his handsome features wrapt up in meditation are suffused with a vision of the glorious ideas floating in his brain and his eyes almost sparkle with youthful genius. It is in every respect admirably executed.

'Lesbia, the Mistress of Catullus, at her toilet is another lovely statue from Milan. It is perfectly nude and although the catalogue says "at her toilet" she is merely standing in a small marble bath or basin. I examined this statue rather attentively and am quite satisfied with my examination. Without being at all tragic or sensational — not however that grace is its predominating characteristic — it is a simple, natural, truthful and beautiful image. It was the figure — quite nude — more than the face which attracted chiefly my attention. It is an almost perfect female form; its perfect symmetry is most pleasing to the eye. It is of white marble slightly veined with black, rather under life-size, not too fat, as some good statues are, and without sensual voluptuousness; although not cold and unpleasing in contour: it is warm without sensuousness. It is a most carefully executed piece of work; it is as excellent as is any statue I remember to have seen for a long time. The muscles and the various inward parts of the body are so plainly and truthfully portrayed but all subdued with the grace of nature and it is yet as I said without sensuality or immodesty. There is one fault — not exactly a great fault — but a serious one. The artist in his almost servile attention to his model has apparently so far forgotten the subject he was sculpturing as to give Lesbia her doubled

up fourth toe. For I cannot think that Lesbia had such a toe. And though through a foolish and ridiculous modern custom we cramp up the foot most unnaturally one might in painting and in sculpture preserve the natural foot, for it is both more natural and more elegant, especially in such a statue as Lesbia.

'But it is the form and the anatomy which principally struck me for their truth and naturalness. I will not specify instances of this because in our present fastidious and decorous age it would be considered a most indecent breach of propriety. Why so, I know not; perhaps I might be told that it would corrupt youth. Though how that can be I know not when it is that same youth who gloats and revels in that which in his hands is transformed into filthiness. Oh! the vistas of disgusting filthiness in a schoolboy's mind which is ever creeping out of his mouth; which he scribbles everywhere; which he must commit to paper, which he must turn into filthy doggerel. The reason partly may be that in this decorous land such things are forgotten and ignored; if we adopted a more Spartan principle it might be obviated. But we are now thoroughly civilized; it might do in an uncivilized country like Sparta but not in a country like England — look for instance at France. Oh! but this that I speak of is deeply, far more deeply rooted than to be eradicated by legislation. It is universal and in all alike: oh, we may reprobate; we may execrate it; but it is in all alike: yes, in myself, in you, friend. In all alike whether with the gloating of a schoolboy or the gusto and smack of the lips of a Frenchman — or woman. It is in all alike, although it may be concealed under the careless or frowning brow. And we see it also in that little smile for a moment lighting up the mouth and eyes of two high-souled lovely females when thinking themselves

unseen by another; — a little thing; but revealing so — oh — so much. It was always so ever since Eve perceived that she was naked and girded her loins with fig leaves; we do not sufficiently recognize the depths of that fall; it seems so dim and shadowy in the far past; we are so used to its effects we cannot dissociate our minds from them and we think that Christ has wholly done away with the effects of the fall; — but no; He has only *bruised* the serpent's head at present, not destroyed it, — and ever will be so till the second Paradise. In what I am saying I have no wish to reproach my brothers and sisters, for this — I know not, I confess, *what* it is — is universal. We need not go far to exemplify it. There is a modification of it; we see it in part in that young man and the pretty young female selling catalogues — see how he bends over with a lascivious smile whispering a word of compliment, and see how she lowers her eyes and smiles; and what a charming red blush suffuses her cheek. I said "in part" advisedly, for on her part the smile may be attributed perhaps to vanity, and the blush to a certain female *pudeur*.

'I know not how I came to write all this but it is all true and from my heart; and as it is solely for my own eye I let it remain; for do not let it be imagined that I wholly disagree with this decorous and fastidious age; for indecent writing — although it may have no effect on an adult — would encourage and delight the school boy; as to a young girl — I confess that the idea of her seeing indecent writing likes me not. For the merit in this that I speak of consists not in not having those same thoughts, but in not expressing them. It is a poor, a very poor, merit indeed, but in the mind they are not to be eradicated. Religion does not remove them; I question if it removes them in the slightest de-

gree; but it teaches us to keep them in subjection. And, after all, if there is a base and low earthy nature in us there is also in most of us, I hope, a high and noble nature. It is not our fault that we have the former: let us so cultivate and increase the latter that the earthy lascivious nature may be brought in some degree into subjection to the higher and heavenly nature.'

Thus began in Henry's soul that irrepressible conflict between the drive of life and fear of sex which characterized his generation. How could he possibly face the issue sanely — when the beauty of the human body only called up disgusting anecdotes on the part of his playmates, the elder generation was engaged in a conspiracy of silence, and the clergy dwelt with fierce delight on the horrors of the 'fall,' brought about by sinful desires. Such a background might well have turned him into a self-righteous inquisitor devoted to the crucifixion of the flesh. But within less than eighteen months he learned to see with new eyes. Even at this time his interest in impersonal analysis, his concern with Lesbia's toe and the origin of blushing, prophesied an early escape from prudery.

In October, 1874, he went for the second time to the International Exhibition, and was disappointed in the painting but delighted by some of the sculpture. 'There was one little terra-cotta — I think — figure on the face of which I could have gazed for hours. It is called "Miranda before the Time of the Play." The sweet look of the maidenly face; and that fair and open look which resembles nothing but the fair and open face of Heaven and surpasses even that — that look which gives such infinite loveliness to some female faces was impressed in some slight degree on this figure and drew me by an irresistible charm. I again admired Lesbia which is so carefully executed and I believe,

though my knowledge of the female is not very great, with a strict attention to Nature. At all events it is an infinitely more graceful form than many perhaps any that I remember seeing (the delineation of the muscles also intimates an exact copy from nature), but it altogether differs from the Venus di Medici; Venus di Medici is a plump, matronly though graceful figure — at least so I should think — while Lesbia is comparatively a slight and petite figure with a minimum of plumpness. But I wish to modify my opinion of Lesbia's toe in favour of the sculptor. I have since that remarked the little toes of some colossal feet in the British Museum, also several other statues of different ages and times finding them all to agree with this; but still I can hardly believe this to be the natural form of the toe.'

Already the synthetic mind of Ellis had begun to operate. The same objects become the starting-point for æsthetic judgment, anatomical discussion, psychological observation, moral commentary — *The Dance of Life* in embryo. It is a dangerous procedure which will always expose him to the scorn of any hasty specialist. While speaking of some painting he may pass quietly from definite artistic appreciation to a problem in racial anthropology or the psychology of creation. Here are data for all his interests. One cannot begin to estimate how thoroughly the style and the thought of Ellis has been enriched by those thousands of hours spent in the galleries of Europe.

These speculations in no way reduced Henry's immense delight in the Waverley novels, which he read and re-read as a steady diet from twelve until seventeen. They helped to counteract his more messianic investigations and brought him into contact with the world of physical nature to which he was somewhat

blind. His written comments are of no special interest, except that in their cross-references they indicated his familiarity with dozens of Scott's characters. In the spring of 1874 he was quite bowled over by *The Caged Lion*, one of Charlotte Mary Yonge's ingenious imitations of Scott. It is a highly idealized story of the unfortunate James I of Scotland and Henry V, perfect patterns of generosity and courage. It made Henry's 'eyes swim in burning, scalding tears and wrung agonized blood-drops from his heart in painful heart-throbs.' . . .'O God, may grace to us be given, to *follow* in their train; we can hope to approach them but very distantly. I had intended to speak of earnestness; the earnestness of this book; the earnestness of English literature as shown by Professor Henry Morley and the earnestness of life, but cannot now. Probably I shall mention the subject another time.'

Some days later Henry sat down to write a few lines about *The Professor*, Charlotte Brontë's first novel. As he had read none of her other works he feared that his opinion might not be sufficiently high. 'But as it is, I have not a low opinion of Charlotte Brontë's genius. I certainly do not feel inclined to indulge in such eloquent raptures over her as I am surprised to find I have indulged in, in the review preceding this, but that was on a character of history and not of fiction. I hardly knew I was capable of such facile eloquence as appeared in that last review written on a Saturday evening; I know the next day I was very ill; not that I think that had anything to do with it. I may here mention that these little reviews — if they may be so called — are almost always written without premeditation and literary care which in this headlong age are too little thought of; but I merely write these notices, sometimes to give vent to pent up emotions awakened by

the books reviewed, or to give my opinion on a writer or a book, or perhaps to exercise myself in composition, or exercise my judgment. Want of time and their only being intended for my own eyes may be sufficient excuse for this lack of care.'

The Professor Henry did not consider 'an eminently interesting tale,' although the two main figures were well drawn. He suspected that the Brontës carried too far their dislike for perfect characters. 'About 2 good to 30 bad is unnatural; it would be highly so, I cannot help thinking in England; I should fancy so in Belgium. I suppose Charlotte Brontë must have been to Belgium before she wrote the Professor, or she would not have dared describe Belgium and the Flemish. But I sincerely think that Miss Brontë acts well in thus putting away — in a manner that would be ungallant in a man — those absurd, sentimental, wholly unreal ideas about woman which a day's unrestrained intercourse with a lady's school would entirely dissipate.'

Of course, Henry could not realize that the Brontë novels were supreme delineations of women characters and excellent background for his own life-work. He probably read *The Professor* on the recommendation of Angus MacKay who published years later a notable little study, *The Brontës, Fact and Fiction*, which anticipated conclusions drawn from the Héger letters, only recently accessible. MacKay wrote quite truly: 'There is a peculiarity in Charlotte Brontë's novels which differentiates them from all other writings of their class — I refer to the fact that love in them is treated, not from the man's but from the woman's point of view. This was almost a new element in literature.'

At this time Henry had less than a year more of regular schooling before him and never attended one of

those large public institutions which Thomas Hughes made famous. The following comment is therefore particularly interesting: 'When I began (May 20th, 1874) Tom Brown's School Days I scarcely intended to notice it in these pages. My opinions indeed of that popular book were hardly favorable to Tom Hughes but now I have finished it that antipathy — if indeed it went so far — is entirely removed. It is in one sense quite different from what I expected, and my opinion of the author is much elevated. There is something singularly noble and frank in his words in the preface about preaching — with which I most entirely agree.' In the preface Hughes replied to the criticism that there is 'too much preaching' in his book, by insisting that he had no other motive. 'I can't see that a man has any business to write a book unless he has something which he thoroughly believes and wants to preach about. If he has this, and the chance of delivering himself of it, let him by all means put it in the shape in which it will be most likely to get a hearing; but let him never be so carried away as to forget that preaching is his object.' In those palmy days there was little talk in England about art for art's sake and only a weakling would write merely to amuse!

> 'Life is real, life is earnest,
> And the grave is not its goal.'

Henry was in full sympathy with Hughes and Longfellow. His comment on *Tom Brown* continues: 'And the book itself is so plainly *vraisemblant* so thoroughly wholesome and elevated and yet completely a boy's book and withal so pervaded by a true manly religion that I wish there were a hundred Thomas Hugheses who might take the place of all the Edwin Bretts and the multifold little writers with little talents who hold

forth in those unashamed publications, The Boys of England, Boys of the World, Young Men of Gt. Britain, and so many others sad to say so numerous. Tom Brown I have discovered, though the world knew it long ago, is a splendid boy's book of the right sort and deservedly a favourite with boys. Its outspoken manly religion enchanted me. Again I repeat that I wish to God we had fewer Edwin Bretts and more Tom Hugheses in this world of ours. This is but a sad notice of a great book. But the truth is that the few hours on Saturday and Monday morning before breakfast are so fully occupied that I scarcely find time for anything, especially just now when I am preparing for confirmation. I have in these few hours several periodicals to read or look over, to continue a novel I am writing, and various other minor engagements or affairs to attend. But I am a believer in making time.'

He had been working on the 'novel' for over three weeks, true to his promise of April 24th that he would mention the subject of earnestness another time. His unfinished comment on the subject ran to eighteen thousand words and was entitled 'An Earnest Life,' undoubtedly one of the most earnest narratives ever composed. He had a wider knowledge of pictures than the ordinary youth, but the whole circle of his experiences was very much narrower. Of a retiring nature and reared in an austere home, he did not anticipate the precocious exploits of the promiscuous children of today and when, like them, he sat down to write a novel, at the ripe age of fifteen, he had pathetically little to say. He could simply make the best of his few contacts with the world — art galleries, serious books, lonely musings, French teachers, the House of God. At times he achieved good pictorial effects and by laborious descriptions brought one or two of his characters to

life. The hero, Walter Woodleigh, alias Henry H. Ellis, was well revealed — so reflective, so industrious, so dutiful, preparing to take the burden of mankind on his shoulders and walk off with it alone.

The first chapter pictures the old village of Almundham with the house and grounds of Sir William Woodleigh, 'a modern Sir Roger de Coverley or Sir Everard Waverley.' The servants are surprised by the sudden return of Walter Woodleigh, the younger son of the family, who is described meticulously. 'Within his eyes, and mingling with that sad gravity with which Dante and Tasso and Ariosto are represented, there was also a fire almost worthy of these same poets, which could flash a glance like a diamond in anger, or melt into almost womanly tenderness.'

'To make acquaintance with the Hamiltons,' neighbors of the Woodleighs, we are taken with them through the National Gallery. As a matter of fact we hear little from the Hamiltons, as they are occupied in listening to the instructive remarks of Walter Woodleigh. Strangely enough, his opinions are exactly the same as those expressed in Ellis's notes of April 8th. He has much to say of Raphael and Guido. He emphasizes the importance of painting in the cultivation of the imagination. There are slight touches of humor in the attempt at dialogue, which Walter made largely a soliloquy. 'But,' he apologizes, after ten pages, 'I am getting into a lecturing style and fatiguing you,' so the party goes home.

The third chapter is devoted to the physical appearance of the five members of the Hamilton family. 'The features, properly interpreted, are a valuable aid to the study of the mind. Therefore I am dwelling rather more than otherwise I should on facial characteristics in order that the features of the outward and false body

may be a faint representation of the lineaments of the inner and true body, — that soul or self — the words are one and the same — which is the ME.' The elaborate description of the eyes of one of the daughters, with the various poetic and pseudo-scientific interpretations, recalls the data on eyes Ellis had been gathering some months earlier.

The main chapter, the fourth, is headed by the sentence of Schiller, 'Ernst ist das leben,' which Henry had just found on the title page of Carlyle's *Past and Present.* Walter Woodleigh is deeply imbued with youth's tremendous seriousness. Though 'no hater of society or the delights of town life,' he preferred 'the quiet pleasures of the country.' . . . 'He was a lover of nature and of solitude: — Nature, not in her extravagant exaggerations, not in the eccentricity of her wild and strange contortions, hardly in the fearful solemnity of her sublimity, or even in her most awful beauty. But rather in the *every-day* loveliness, gentle and pleasing, of her unchanged, yet ever unchanging paradisial primeval beauty. And by the word Nature he understood — not as the Jews in the time of Joel, and many others more recently have regarded it, as a vast machine for grinding convenient supplies — but as the "time-vestment of God"; the garment of beauty, by which, apart from religion, He makes Himself known unto the children of men, which conceals His almighty glory, but through which may be caught the glimpses of his ineffable wonder — the pure heavenly glory of which pervades that divine garment.'

In order to escape the heat within doors Walter has come down to the bank of the stream, to finish Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh.* 'Walter's reading was extensive, and his taste wide and appreciative; perhaps I may call it catholic.' He is overwhelmed by 'the

mighty hand of true poetry' which produced *Aurora Leigh*. Nothing has ever moved him so deeply. 'Oh! dear reader, the words prefixed to this chapter are a text pregnant with life and truth. Ernst ist das leben — a divine truth impregnating the whole vast realms of Nature and art. Life is earnest. That is the very key-note and moving spirit of life; the diamond point on which all life — if it is true life — must move.' This axiom is now established at great length by the author, the hero and his sister, with the assistance of Mrs. Browning, Carlyle and Longfellow.

For variety's sake we are next introduced to two schoolmasters, Mr. Hood and M. Delavigne, who have taken their pupils to play in a large private park. In amusingly broken English and French, M. Delavigne tells a long story, of the attempt of a curé to find his flock in Heaven and Hell, finally to be pursued himself with a toasting-iron.

The sixth and seventh chapters are the most fragmentary of all. In the former are described the avaricious owner of the park and two evil-looking strangers. In the latter an apostrophe to the ocean is followed by the very sudden drowning of Captain Brooke, an entirely new character, who had gone rowing with Agnes Hamilton.

It is Sunday in Almundham. God is in the very air. The sweet village chimes have called the people to worship. Mr. Forster, vicar of the parish church, is in an unusually eloquent mood. To-day he shows how we are not to be saved by works or faith alone, but by the union of both. ('Mr. Forster' was, of course, the Reverend J. C. Erck of Merton, for whom Henry had the greatest admiration.)

'I mention this discourse of Mr. Forster's chiefly to speak of a great influence it exerted on Walter Wood-

leigh. Walter had not yet quite given up the idea that practical good is no longer to be obtained from sermons; and if Mr. Forster had known the influence this sermon exerted on his young hearer he might not perhaps have been so often tempted to despair. We left Walter Woodleigh in a state wavering and undecided, conscious of his own meaningless and purposeless life, just aroused out of sleep to the sense of a new life — a life he had never felt before. He was doubtful in what path to direct his newly found energies, or rather but half decided; but after hearing this sermon, covering as it did the ground of his own thoughts, his indecision vanished. An aim was now presented to his longing and upward aspirations, — the fuel was now found for the fire which had been kindled by the poet. In this way, he thought, shall I work out the words of Mrs. Browning:

> "We must be here to work,
> And men who work can only work for men,
> And not to work in vain must comprehend
> Humanity and so work humanly,
> And raise men's bodies still by raising souls."

He wished to live in the true sense of the word, and he knew that "when we live we suffer and toil." He believed that not to work in vain we must "raise men's bodies still by raising souls." He was not a poet, although of a poetic temperament. He lamented this, for he felt that the church of Poetry preached the true and deep sermon of life, but he knew well that though great labour is needed to form the poet still he is *nascitur non fit;* and although all true poetry must be — and always has been — the off-shoot of earnestness of life he knew that if he ever became a poet it would be *fit non nascitur*. He felt therefore that literature — *literature as a purpose in life* — must be set aside. For

him, therefore, there only remained one course, namely that of which he had chosen, a position in which truly he might "raise men's bodies still by raising souls," remembering the infinitely greater importance of the latter. Yes, he said to himself on his way home, after shaking hands with the Hamiltons and congratulating Rosa on her recovery, yes, he said — the buoyancy of youth overcoming all difficulties — I will become a clergyman. The church is a field noble and worthy in which to work. Henceforth that is my field.

'And he disappeared through the stately gates of his father's park.'

So endeth 'An Earnest Life.' If it gives little indication of what Henry was to become, it summarizes well what he seemed to be up to that time. Not only in fiction did he contemplate entering the pulpit, for that was his actual plan, heartily endorsed by his mother, Reverend Erck and Angus MacKay, and not until four years later did Henry abandon that plan entirely.

During the summer of 1874, he read carefully, in the original, a dozen of Molière's plays. Beginning with *La Jalousie du barbouillé*, *Le Médecin volant* and *L'Étourdi*, he considered the wit coarse and indecent, when it was not absent. 'Nevertheless I cannot say that I have found these insuperable obstacles to my enjoyment of these three plays, though as I advance further in the realm of Molière's unrivalled comedy I hope to be infinitely more pleased in all respects.' Henry was dangerously anxious to give every author his due, and when disappointed at the start in a work of great note, tried to anticipate a more happy understanding. Such caution led eventually to a beautiful catholicity in Ellis, but also at times to a soft toleration. *Le Dépit amoureux* and *Les Précieuses ridicules* proved to be a great improvement on the last three plays he had re-

viewed, although his 'as yet imperfect acquaintance with French literature and even the French language' prevented him from criticizing them with a good conscience. At least he could find no fault with their moral import. *L'École des maris* and *L'École des femmes* showed the superiority of moral over physical force in the domestic field. He had heard before of the character of Agnes: 'that she is a beautifully pure creation I am now fully satisfied, especially as produced by a Frenchman.' It is more informing to learn that in *L'École des femmes* Molière 'proves original sin. I don't know whether he meant to or not. But at all events in my opinion he does so, though I have not time to enlarge on the subject now.' 'My admiration of Molière has greatly increased, now I have begun to read him; and my concluding piece of advice is, never form an opinion of any author till you have read him.'

Coming to Keats for the first time Henry is much delighted by the luxurious world of *Endymion*, but in his brief comment is chiefly concerned with pointing out the beauty of Keats's Diana in contrast to Rubens's fleshly goddesses and Shakespeare's voluptuous Venus. Unable to grasp the meaning of *Lamia* he merely judges it a foolish tale and *Isabella* ridiculous. *The Eve of St. Agnes* brings to him all the color that his own life lacks, without shocking his moral sensibilities. He dwells fondly on the maiden and her lover, for no similar scenes in any other author has he liked so well.

But this is pale commendation compared with what Henry has to say of Alexander Smith's *Life-Drama*. 'I had hardly ever heard of this gentleman before this book was lent to me, I am sorry to say. No book ever impressed me so much as Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh" and since I read that wonderful poem nothing has touched me more than Alex Smith's Life-Drama.

Both Aurora Leigh and Life-Drama are of the subjective class of poetry — the latter in a minor degree though of course Mrs. Browning is far superior to Mr. Smith. All I know of the latter is, as I should have fancied, he died young. He came up as a wave on the shore of life quivering and panting with the intensity of its deep soul, spread itself in one great burst on the beach and sank back exhausted into the Infinite. But I know a great deal of him from his poem which though in the dramatic form is not a drama being entirely destitute of plot or *vraisemblance*. I hope it is not presumption, at all events it is truth — if I say that very many passages of his poem are just my own feelings even thoughts embalmed in the most lovely musical blank verse.'

A Life-Drama caused a wide stir when it appeared in 1853 and soon passed through several editions. It was the work of a twenty-two-year-old Scotchman who combined Byronic emotions with a Victorian conscience, and wrote in monotonous, bombastic blank-verse that faintly suggested the grand manner. He had much to say about love, stars, Death, the World and God. For example —

> 'I come from far,
> I'll rest myself, O World! a while on thee,
> And half in earnest, half in jest, I'll cut
> My name upon thee, pass the arch of Death,
> Then on a stair of stars go up to God.'

Walter, the beautiful young hero of *A Life-Drama*, is determined to conquer mankind with a wonderful poem and show the way to Paradise. He is disappointed in love by one melancholy lady, but later commits sin with the pure, innocent Violet — 'they made their lives wine-cups and then drank them off.' Consequently Walter suffers from terrible remorse, feels his

soul rotting away, looks down into the abyss of Hell. ('I should like to repeat the whole of this touching scene,' remarks Henry in his notes. 'I cannot think of anything for passion and intensity in the whole range of poetry equalling those ninth and tenth scenes. Unfortunately I have not read Byron. I should think that Dante comes something near it.') After losing complete faith in God and Woman, Walter recovers it again, abandons his mad pursuit of fame, and settles down to a long, happy life with her whom he had wronged. 'I have mentioned the sentiments of delight with which the Life-Drama held me embraced during my first and second perusal of it and the abiding impression it will leave on my mind. Alex Smith died young, I am told — the only fact I know about him — and this is the only book he wrote, I believe. But I do not think he would ever have written anything else equal to the Life-Drama. His genius seems a very narrow one, if I may so express it, its whole strength was compressed into one point; its whole power focussed in one direction and having in one grand effort thrown his soul out he would hardly write again. Passion and intensity are the great points, almost the only points at which he excels and they are things very short-lived. His Life-Drama is not about an ordinary life in the least, it is as far removed from drama as anything bearing that name can be, though I think he chose the best possible name — and it has not the least *vraisemblance* or resemblance to the life and conversation of ordinary mortals — two things in which the drama ought to be pre-eminent. But it must not — will not be judged as a drama. It is full of incongruities and inconsistencies and it is not sufficiently artistic, but it thrills and pulses with the life blood of a human being, it mirrors the passions and aspirations of man, though of only one

man and that himself; and the every line of it is true poetry.'

'Thanks to Mr. J. Dick of 315 Strand and his Standard Plays,' wrote Henry in the fall of 1874, 'I have had an introduction to Mr. Philip Massinger in the person of "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," a capital comedy. I have as yet but slight acquaintance with the old dramatists, except of course Shakespeare.' And so, to fill up this gap in his knowledge, Henry read not only Massinger but a great number of seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth century plays, which he bought in Dick's series for a penny each. Here was the beginning of his interest in the Elizabethan drama which led him twelve years later to originate the Mermaid Series of Old Dramatists. More immediately, this interest in plays led Henry to the diabolic masterpieces of the Restoration, which gave a much-needed shock to his moral equanimity. The dramatic habit of mind, like the æsthetic point of view generally, tends to destroy rigid categories, and as Henry learned to understand motives and manners he became less concerned about passing judgments.

Meanwhile, practically none of his reading had conflicted directly with his orthodox credo. He accepted completely the teachings of his Church and felt sorry for those who lacked the great assurance. Concerning *Past and Present* he remarked: 'Carlyle's idea of God and the gods (he uses both terms), are lamentably vague. And though he preaches the Christian religion and calls Christ the greatest genius that ever lived, it is apparent that he recognizes nothing superhuman in Our Lord. He saw God and knew him not. This, while it increases the interest of the book, is one of the saddest points in it.'

Shortly before he was sixteen Henry read for the

first time a frankly sceptical work, Renan's famous *Life of Jesus*, and wrote out a detailed comment. 'The two great representatives of modern infidelity which recognize the human grandeur of Christ, are Strauss and Renan, although they disagree in many of the fundamental points (if there are any) of disbelief. Of the two I fancy I should prefer M. Ernest Renan and it is he that I have read, thanks to Messrs. Trubner publishing his Life of Jesus (rather a translation thereof) at 1/6. The translation is good and apparently accurate though I can well believe it does not convey the beauty of the style of the original. To begin with the more non-essential things, the book is an extremely interesting one, more so than I expected. It is never dull or commonplace and nearly always original. I propose to look at it from two points of view, viz. an artistic and religious point of view. To begin with the first which is certainly the more satisfactory, the Vie de Jesus has given me great pleasure. Renan wrote the book amidst the very scenes in which Jesus lived and worked and he tells us that this powerfully influenced him and gave the gospel narrative a reality which to him it had never before possessed. This is powerfully impressed on the book and there is an air of poetry and beauty cast over it by the refined and romantic mind of Renan under the influence of the associations excited by the Holy Land which gives the work the appearance of a beautiful idyll. The absence of all argument, for Renan never argues, he always dogmatizes, heightens this idea and makes the perusal of the book very delightful. Of course properly to enjoy this idyll from an artistic point of view the Christ of Monsieur Renan and the Christ of the Bible must be quite dissociated in the mind.'

After a careful statement of Renan's main argu-

ments, Henry ends his essay: 'M. Renan's belief that Christ was a man, the gospels a collection of legends which have gathered around a common nucleus, solves many great problems, many strange mysteries, many fearful doubts which nearly two thousand years of anxious research and thought by all modes of reasoning by the most intelligent portion of the world have only mystified and complicated into a more inextricable uncertainty. So it is easy to sympathize with Newman who in the search for truth wearied with the fruitlessness of that search, by the roadside fell and perished, at least as far as search for truth is concerned. But then on the other hand if we are to accept M. Renan's (I use the name in synecdoche) solution of the mystery we only fall into a deeper darkness; a more fearfully complicated mystery yet; a darkness in which man is an utter mystery as well as everything else; and I, at least, have no hesitation in saying that did I disbelieve in the divine (in the strictest sense) mission of Christ I should most certainly disbelieve in the existence of God — except indeed it were a Pantheistic divinity — some such one as Shelley believed in. Without Christ, God would be a useless being either malevolent or if benevolent, impotent. And if either malevolent or impotent it were better that there were no God, and in the latter case there would for all practical purposes be no God.'

Henry's highest enthusiasm was aroused at this time by P. H. Bailey's *Festus*, one of the longest and most tedious volumes of verse ever written, the chief example of what was called 'the spasmodic school of poetry.' It was published in 1839, when the author was only twenty-three, but he spent the next fifty years enlarging it and bringing out new editions. 'Very soon after its appearance,' confessed Bailey in 1889, 'the author

perceived the original outlines to be sufficiently extensive and elastic to admit almost every variety of classifiable thought and reasonable enlargement of purpose upon such matters as human faith, morals and progress could not fail to present to the ripening experiences of life.' *Festus* does include almost every variety of classifiable thought from the beginning to the end of the world, a tremendous outpouring of optimistic theology. It is like Goethe's *Faust*, except that it contains none of Goethe's qualities. Yet *Festus* was tremendously popular and admired by Tennyson and most of the prominent poets of the period. For Henry H. Ellis it proved to be a revelation more thrilling than *Aurora Leigh* or *A Life-Drama*.

'This is one of those books of which there are about a dozen in the literature of the world, which fill me with unbounded admiration and to which I do not one day despair of adding a humble contribution. Such a book is Faust, Prometheus, Job and such a book is "Festus." "Festus" indicates the great inclination of all the best modern poetry to find out and reconcile the great problems of life and death and evil and good and sin and heaven and hell. . . . The form in which it is cast is that of the dramatic form which is often adapted now, of division into scenes of any length but without anything else dramatic but the form; one speech for instance in Festus is nearly 40 pages long. There is no incident whatever except the small incident of the destruction of the world. It is simply the narrative of one human soul with a thirst of knowledge, and a love of beauty which almost leads him into sin but with a steadfast faith in good all the way through. . . .

'Bailey's idea is that evil is not sin, that is there is no such thing as sin, that such a thing would be an insult to the Deity, that what we call sin is merely a part of

the one harmonious whole of our life which we must work out and that Nature means necessity. He justly considers punishment is not eternal and that nothing less than the whole sum of humanity could satisfy Christ's love. That is the gospel of Festus and a very good gospel too. . . .

'One idea which pervades the poem is specially worthy of notice nowadays; it is the feeling of God; there is a boundless faith in Him, and though he feels that His ways are unsearchable and past finding out he yet has gone far in the grand task of justifying His ways to men. For now it often happens that men make God unjust and unmerciful and a tyrant and then say they won't have such a God and cast God aside with scorn when all along it is not God they are dissatisfied with, but their own miserable creation of Him. The God of many of us, too, is much too shadowy benevolent a God. We need to think of God as Bailey has taught, as the "Good" and therefore if anyone attributes to that God aught unjust or tyrannous then it is not God who is unjust or tyrannous but the man who attributes vice to Him who is perfect good. We need an unbounded faith in *God* such as Festus always testified even at his worst moments and when we find anything in the world which apparently militates against this idea of God's unlimited goodness, it is we who are wrong *and not God.*'

Thus spake Henry at the beginning of his sixteenth year. He was one hundred per cent Victorian, possessing in full measure that earnestness so much stressed by the eminent Dr. Arnold. His intense interest in moral problems left little room for a sense of humor. In spite of narrow circumstances he already displayed a boundless curiosity, but he was pedantic and industrious rather than brilliant. Among his more hardened

schoolmates he was probably considered a prig, if not a 'sissy.' In his own mind he was still a literal child of God, warmed by the hope of one day preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER III

THE SEX THEME

In that orthodox enviroment Henry's scientific proclivities received little encouragement. His mother, his pastor, his best friend, had other interests, and he was left to collect data in his own elementary way, without training and without a library. Although Euclid was easy for him, he had no aptitude for mathematics[1] and no opportunity for the study of physical science at Mr. Grover's school. With a deep sense of ignorance, therefore, he 'hastened to procure the very week it was published' a copy of Huxley's *Essays Selected from Lay Sermons, Addresses and Reviews*, in spite of the fact that Huxley was a terrible agnostic who dripped poison in the land. In connection with this book Henry wrote: 'The claims of science are every day becoming more formidable, every day the importance of the struggle between Revealed Religion and Discovered Science is becoming more marked, and I must confess that my knowledge of the scientific side of the question is very circumscribed, being in fact almost limited to zealous ecclesiastical tirades and satiric poems, all directed against it. . . . In "A Liberal Education and Where to Find It" there are some very sensible remarks on education, not only in the elementary but also in the public schools. No better proof could be given of the way in which the classics are taught than the small number of those who do not hate the sight of a Latin or Greek book after they leave

[1] In answer to a direct question Ellis recently wrote: 'No aptitude at all for physics and mathematics, and never went beyond elementary stages. They were always difficult. Euclid was easy.'

school. Of course, I am not speaking against the classics being taught; a gentleman of great experience in tuition told me that they are of greater value than mathematics in teaching to think. But I believe our education is rapidly improving, science is being taught and that with an incalculable benefit. Education is altogether more liberal, and the improvements made during the last 50 years in the modes of teaching are wonderful. The essay on protoplasm or the physical basis of life is on all accounts very interesting. Protoplasm has always been an inexplicable word to me and I am very grateful to Professor Huxley for having described it so particularly. I am not competent to speak on the scientific side of the question. The conclusions up to which Huxley wishes to lead are very easily discerned and he does not attempt to disguise them, viz. " that is, the thought to which I am now giving utterance and your thoughts regarding them are the expression of molecular changes in that matter of life which is the source of our other vital phenomena." With this result I propose to deal elsewhere. It is rather important to note that Huxley altogether disclaims materialism, although he admits the use of materialistic terminology.'

In 1875, sixteen years after the publication of *The Origin of Species*, the critical issue for the world was evolution, or 'development.' It became serious in Great Britain, however, as early as 1844, with the anonymous appearance of *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (by Robert Chambers, bookseller and author of Edinburgh), a highly inaccurate but exceedingly stimulating book presenting vividly the whole panorama of development from a theological premiss. Passing through numerous editions, it was greatly improved by 1853, but this did not prevent the fiery

young Huxley from condemning it violently as a piece of preposterous speculation. Darwin was always much more favorable: 'the writing and arrangement are certainly admirable, but his geology strikes me as bad, and his zoölogy far worse.' (1844.) 'Have you read that strange unphilosophical but capitally written book, the "Vestiges"?' (1845.) 'In my opinion it has done excellent service in this country in calling attention to the subject, in removing prejudice, and in thus preparing the ground for the reception of analogous views.' (1872.)

The *Vestiges* first enabled young Ellis to see the principle of evolution in a benevolent light, stilling his orthodox suspicions by simply denying that there was any conflict between theology and science. Such verbal audacity would have left him cold at a later date, but at that time it helped to save him from the muddy marshes of controversy. 'I have lately come to take a great interest in scientific subjects of a certain nature, not so much however with the minutiæ as with the broad principles and the direction in which they are travelling. In botany I do not take a great interest, still less in zoölogy. The study of man is much more to my taste than the study of animals and I take an interest in physiology and a still greater interest in psychology. This book, dealing, as it does, with nearly all the sciences without entering too much into the details of each, was therefore to my taste. But it has a deeper interest. The author of "Vestiges of Creation" was the first to start the development theory, to give a certain distinctness to endeavour to prove it. And I confess that I have been, until I read this book, altogether unfavourable to the development theory. It has been presented to my view covered with all the ridicule with which it is possible to cover it, and above all I, from

imperfect knowledge of it, had been led to suppose that it was altogether unscriptural and opposed to the idea of the very evidence of a God. But this book has altogether changed my opinion — if it may be called an opinion on the subject. Development does not do away with the evidence of a God, though its followers seek sometimes to do so. Neither is it unscriptural. As far as that is concerned, evolution may apply equally to evolution or creation facts. And as to it being open to ridicule, so are a great many other things which are none the less true for all that. The book is a very interesting one and it proceeds on a certain plan; the earlier chapters indeed are not altogether so interesting to a non-scientific reader from the many necessary technical terms, but the last three or four chapters in which the author explains and defends his theory are deeply interesting and form the larger as well as the more important part of the book. For science is always advancing. I know that modern scientists consider that they have made a great advance on the theory of evolution as it was expounded by the author of the Vestiges of Creation. And as the book was written more than 30 years ago there are inevitably many errors in scientific detail. When the work was written, for instance, Neptune was still undiscovered and geology itself was little more than an infant science. After tracing the history of the world when it first left its parent sun in its voyage through space, describing the commencement of life as far as the knowledge he possessed could describe the advance from the inorganic to the organic and the various eras of the world's history, the writer, having reached man, proceeds to sum up the arguments from the facts he has already given, and endeavours to prove that nature is one great system of causation. He distinctly asserts that all ani-

mals have descended or rather ascended, one from the other, by the ordinary process of generation, though how this occurred he does not attempt to explain and later scientists have only made guesses which to say the least are rather ridiculous. The author of Vestiges of Creation does not go completely into the subject nor manifestly had he devoted all his energies to it, that was reserved for Darwin, but he broke up the ground and prepared the way for a more general reception of the doctrine.

'To me it appears that we have yet much to learn — we may never learn all as to evolution, but that the general principles evolved are correct, I have not the least doubt. This is in conformity with all that we know of God's working in Nature. Everything proceeds from the great Mother's womb slowly and gradually, and in their grand silences no movement is seen, whole epochs are not to God as one day. And as the author of Vestiges has pointed out, it argues power more truly God-like on the part of the Deity to have forseen and provided for everything beforehand than by new creations to fill up vacancies as they occur.'

At this time there was a third semi-scientific work which especially impressed Henry and indicated his new direction — *Human Physiology, The Basis of Social and Sanitary Science*, by T. L. Nichols, M.D., a shrewd Yankee who lived in London. A popular survey of the field of knowledge, from physics to ethics, it had some of the wide appeal of that recent success, *Why We Behave Like Human Beings*. Aside from the variety of material the unique feature was an eighty-page section on the laws of reproduction, treated in a scrupulously conventional manner. Any discussion of the topic was then a mark of rare candor. Huxley's *Elementary Physiology*, often considered the ideal text-

book, went through many editions without a chapter on reproduction.

Henry first learned of Nichols through his earlier outline, *Behaviour, A Manual of Manners and Morals*, and wrote him a note about it. This mode of expressing appreciation directly to the author later became characteristic of Ellis and led to friendships such as those with the relatives of James Hinton, 'Michael Field,' Edward Carpenter, and Olive Schreiner. In this way also began his friendly correspondence with Freud, Jules de Gaultier, and other authors whom he has never met. A man profoundly reticent in social contacts, Ellis has compensated himself with a capacity for writing letters quickly and easily.

In Part III of 'Books I Have Read' is a long comment on *Human Physiology:* 'Being an occasional correspondent of Dr. Nichols and having mentioned to him my intention of procuring this work he kindly sent me a copy. Physiology is a very important subject, though I cannot boast of much knowledge concerning it; I was anxious, therefore, for the perusal of such a work as this. Dr. Nichols's work is not like the generality of such works. It is less technical. It is also on a broader basis and deals in some degree with psychology and social science; in fact physiology proper only occupies one part of six. All six parts of the book are deeply interesting, though the last three are more valuable than the others; and I will say a few words on what I think of each.' Henry's comments on the earlier sections contain no distinctly personal reactions, but further on there occurs this significant passage: 'Part IV, dealing with Reproduction of the Human Species and the organs of generation and sexual relations generally, touches upon delicate ground of which Dr. Nichols is fully conscious. I was myself not altogether

convinced of the propriety of this part of the work, but a perusal of it has filled me with admiration of the delicacy with which he has gone to work leaving nothing uncovered or unexplained but without hurting the feelings of the most sensitive reader. To the pure all things are pure and in the hands of all indiscriminating I should not care to place this portion of the book, but everyone else, except perhaps some few morbid prudes, may and ought to read it. I, for one, have learnt a great deal from it. It deals with a subject which most current books on physiology totally ignore. Dr. Nichols says that to read Huxley's work you would not so much as suspect that there was any reproduction of the species. If every married couple in England could have it, it would do a vast amount of good.'

Dr. Nichols was in full sympathy with the most rigid Victorian conventions regarding sex conduct, which he defended at great length: 'I wish only to enforce the law of chastity, and to show that a sound physiology is in perfect unity with the requirements of Christian morality.' 'The law of nature is intercourse for reproduction. The use of marriage for any other purpose is never allowed except as a concession to human infirmity, or as a preventive of greater evils, as polygamy was permitted under the earlier dispensation.' 'Continence, a mutual refraining from the sexual embrace, is the only natural, and ordinarily, the only justifiable mode of preventing pregnancy.' In this discussion Nichols was attacking indirectly a book which had had a wide sale for two decades — *The Elements of Social Science; or Physical, Sexual and Natural Religion*, by a Doctor of Medicine. After describing the traditional 'double standard' of morality and the tacit acceptance of prostitution, Nichols went on to say: 'There is another theory of sexual morals, worse,

if possible, than this, but more logical and consistent. It is the one widely taught by a large and very active school of social reformers in England and elsewhere, under the name of Free Love, by which the names of freedom and love are both perverted; or Sexual Religion; or Social Science.'

Before the year was out young Henry had discovered that terrible book and accepted largely its radical conclusions. At this time, however, the conclusions of Dr. Nichols were sufficiently advanced for him. He ended the note on *Human Physiology* thus: 'It is altogether a wise, healthy and beautiful book, free from all prejudice and orthodox views and containing many subjects for thought; it has given me many ideas. On the subject of education he is in favour of co-education of the sexes which he considers works favourably in America, though others are not of that opinion. I am decidedly in favour of it, but it must be under exceedingly careful supervision, otherwise it cannot but fail. A gentleman with a good deal of tuitional experience has told me that boys do not learn well with girls; that the girls learn well but they corrupt the boys.'

It must be noted again that Henry was then in his sixteenth year, living under the immortal queen in the age before the Freudian flood. He was not only amazingly ignorant of 'the girls,' but also of those other forms of 'corruption' common to the large public schools. No problems of that sort troubled his parents, but they were becoming more and more concerned about him. He was always writing or meditating and they did not know what was on his mind. He was perhaps too devout and conscientious. He was continually alone and did not seem to enjoy the company of his schoolmates. Games did not arouse his enthusiasm. He was tall enough for his age but rather thin. During

the previous four years he had suffered occasionally from severe abdominal pains. The family physician feared that tuberculosis was threatening. The captain's ship, the Surrey, was to sail for Australia in April. A long rest at sea was precisely what the young man needed.

'Will you go, Henry?'

The Surrey headed down the Thames on the 18th of April, 1875. She was carrying a load of immigrants to Australia and as ordinary passengers were not allowed under such circumstances Henry assumed the rôle of 'captain's clerk.' After a week's stop at Plymouth he said good-bye to England, not dreaming that it was a four years' farewell. His immediate prospect was three months on the high seas, without touching land, a few days at Sydney, thence on to Calcutta and home within the year. In the large cabin at the stern which he shared with his father was a new harmonium and his own select little library, including Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise*, George Sand's *Jeanne*, Macaulay's essays, a few dramas in Dick's edition, Goethe's *Faust* in German, and Rabelais in the original French. He also brought the plan for a personal epic in the genre of *Festus* and *A Life-Drama*.

A youth of sixteen, eager and shy, reading and dreaming on a long, blue voyage. The old patterned stimuli dropped off and released fresh energies in his soul. Life in microcosm, condensed, concentrated, pressed upon his eyes. 'Space, rolling and revolving between him and his native heath, possessed and wielded the powers we generally ascribe to time.' [1] The winds of the world were blowing away the evangelical atmosphere in which he was reared and putting an end to his cloistered judgments.

[1] Thomas Mann: *The Magic Mountain*, 4. Eng. trans.

Soon after starting he plunged into Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise*, that volume of stirring lyrics which invariably intoxicates the adolescent heart. He found that Swinburne was in the line of Shelley, but of inferior genius, and such poetry suffers particularly when it becomes part of a school. We are no longer moved so deeply by passionate attacks on government and religion. A true poet, who is also a true philosopher, knows that the nature of man requires some form of government as well as some form of worship, and reckless negation is merely a waste of energy. 'With regard to the Christian religion, it is my firm conviction that as it is now taught its beneficial effects do little more than counterbalance the many baneful influences which the ignorance, the bigotry, the dogmatism of its followers, have engendered. At the same time I think it is a task more worthy of our care to renovate the religion of Christ, to bring it back to its purity and set it in an utterly new light than to endeavour to frame some new religion from which supernaturalism is banished. Unfortunately abstractions cannot cope with personification and it is on that rock that all new faiths have been wrecked. A true religion is that which gives least liberty to do wrong and the greatest liberty to do right, and perhaps, we may add, the greatest incentives to do so. And I think all true souls may hail the religion held by so many which Swinburne represents as a sister faith to their own, whatever that may be.' Some days later Henry re-read many of the poems and found his opinion of them 'much heightened.' He also added that 'Hertha' was one of the finest poems in the volume, 'though from the sentiments expressed few probably can appreciate it.' These notes are far more tolerant than his comment on Renan a few months earlier and indicate that his orthodox

faith was crumbling rapidly. Yet more unusual was his judicial indifference to Swinburne's revolutionary enthusiasm. Whatever the explanation may be, Ellis has never been bitterly hostile to any religious expression nor bound up in any political issue.

At this early date he used the word 'philosopher' in the broad way that became permanent with him. He thought that Swinburne was not a true philosopher because of a certain blindness about human nature, while George Sand was indirectly a philosopher because she was 'proficient in the art of analysing and working out character.' Ellis has not been interested in making a *system* of philosophy and those readers who look for a system in his writings are doomed to disappointment. In *The Dance of Life* we are only on the verge of philosophy, he himself pointed out. Except for one brief period in his early twenties he has escaped the stings of the metaphysical bee, resembling in this respect his master Goethe and his friend Freud. At seventeen he copied out with approval Goethe's famous sentence: 'Man is born not to solve the problems of the universe, but to find out where the problem begins and then restrain himself within the limits of the comprehensible.' In his latest book Freud remarks: 'I am not at all desirous of manufacturing a philosophy of life. One may leave that to the philosophers who confessedly see no way of journeying through life except with a Baedeker that gives information on everything.' In a similar vein Emmanuel Berl has drawn a contrast between psychology and philosophy: 'The pure spirit of psychology is not intolerant. It is that of Montaigne, of Renan, of Sainte-Beuve, who never go so far that they are no longer able to return. A philosopher or a doctor may make innovations in psychology, they may discover and restore. The born psy-

chologist, however, is characterized by a certain resignation, a certain indifference when confronted with contradiction — which philosophers and scientists lack — an acceptance of pluralism. And pluralism seems to be the very method, perhaps the condition, of all psychology.'[1] As a psychologist of this sort Ellis has strolled from time to time in the sacred groves of philosophy.

After making the most of *Songs before Sunrise* on the Surrey he decided to straighten out his thoughts on the Restoration dramatists who had exercised his mind for over a year. His four-thousand-word reflection, dated 'Ship Surrey, May 21st, 1875,' was written 'With special reference to Macaulay's Essay,' which had first interested him in the wicked group. Apparently familiar with all the plays of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar, whom he carelessly called 'the four evangelists' of Restoration comedy, he chastised them soundly for their gross immorality and disdained to discuss Wycherley at all. 'I have least desire to show any palliating circumstances in favour of him who was undoubtedly the first in immorality as he was the least in literary merit.' Yet Henry was convinced that Macaulay had too serious a view of the matter. In natural reaction against Puritanism, the Restoration writers tended to exaggerate their own viciousness. 'I cannot imagine it possible,' said Henry, 'that a man could wish women to express sentiments so frequently enunciated by, for instance, Miss Marwood and Miss Millamant. But the disciples of this school were perfectly capable of imagining a woman, neither a prude nor a hoyden, who could prefer the pleasures of country life to that in town, and have a very just idea of women of fashion, holding, for example, the very sensible opin-

[1] *The Nature of Love*, Eng. trans., 162.

ion that gaming is very unfeminine occupation.' 'And after all, the fine man of fashion never succeeds against the brute and tyrant; he is always thwarted in his intentions and the comedy ends in a reconciliation between the man and his wife, and this ending does not give us a sense of disappointment which would happen in the case of it ending unnaturally.' So Henry suspected that there was some moral purpose behind all that seeming immorality. Unable to gloat timorously or rush away revolted, he was trying desperately to understand a world more remote to him than Heaven. In search of light on the unpardonable mystery, he had grown intimate with geniuses of corruption because no other sources of information were open to him, and for so sheltered a youngster that was a rather severe apprenticeship. Beyond the brilliance of Congreve he enjoyed the warmer humanity of Farquhar in whom he found 'something approaching to that grand sense of the harmony of things which gives to the Elizabethan drama its rich, full ring.'

Meanwhile the Surrey ploughed on and Henry turned to his copy of Rabelais, which he had been induced to purchase by an unsympathetic allusion in Macaulay. Through the veil of old, unfamiliar French, amidst its violent, boisterous disclosure of the obscene, the obverse aspects of existence, he was astonished to find profundity, gentleness and beauty. He was astonished to find that Rabelais was 'a great philosopher' and he determined at once to write an essay which would communicate that discovery to the world — his first serious literary scheme. Thus Henry bade a long farewell to prudery and took up his ideal abode in that famous Abbey of Thelème, 'in whose rule was but one clause, *Fait ce que vouldras*, a rule which no pagan or Christian had ever set up before, because never before,

except as involved in the abstract conceptions of philosophers, had the thought of voluntary coöperation, of the unsolicited freedom to do well, appeared before European men.' [1]

The voyage itself was quiet and uneventful, except for a near catastrophe in the South Atlantic. During a high sea, one huge wave, which had been seen gathering far off, burst over the stern, doing much damage, smashing instruments and flooding the cabin used by Henry and his father. Had they been in it at the time they would have probably been killed, but fortunately, only the harmonium was destroyed. Such a terrific roller was unique even in the experience of the hardy captain who was both amazed and delighted by his son's question — 'Does this often happen, father?' The detail is worth emphasizing because it is easy to assume that the extreme shyness of Ellis has been associated with physical timidity. But that is a mistake: amid the weird isolation of the Australian bush, in a Parisian crowd charged by mounted police, during Zeppelin raids, on a frightened horse, in a storm-threatened aeroplane, he has remained through life the tranquil and curious spectator.

After thirteen weeks at sea the Surrey reached the harbor of Sydney on the 24th of July and was there quarantined for three more weeks because of an epidemic of chicken-pox on board. Then the eventful landing and Henry, who had known so very little of London, was confronted with booming Sydney, boasting a population of two hundred thousand whose vigorous, open manners contrasted sharply with the pale primness of Mitcham and Croydon. At Plymouth he had spent one unmemorable evening in the theatre, but here, on the third or fourth day after landing, he

[1] *Affirmations*, 247.

went to see the great Italian actress Ristori in *Pia de' Tolomei* and the sleep-walking scene from *Macbeth*. Highly enthusiastic, he wrote several pages of impressions at the time and he still remembers vividly her classic simplicity which, in his estimation, places her with Salvini and Chaliapin, those other stars of the stage whom he has admired most.

As the ship's doctor, one Sheridan Hughes, was of the opinion that the poisonous climate of Calcutta, whither the Surrey was embarking, might be fatal for Henry, he agreed to remain in Sydney. Probably his father would be coming that way within a year or two. But what would he do there? A former mate on one of Captain Ellis's ships was associated with the department of education and through his efforts the captain's clerk suddenly became assistant master in a school at Burwood, a small suburb of Sydney. He was not at all qualified for the position and retained it only three months, but at Burwood the most important decision of his life was made.

On the outskirts of a frank colonial city, surrounded by the wild and endless bush, in the midst of a gorgeous southern spring when it was autumn at home, Henry Havelock Ellis began to ask himself dark questions. He had not suffered from a violent, hasty puberty, he had not indulged in precocious erotic experiences, but now full adolescence and these fresh scenes were crowding his mind with sexual thoughts. He had heard the dirty talk of schoolboys, he had stood long before nude works of art, he had read the books of Dr. Nichols, the Restoration dramatists and Rabelais, but he craved more complete and explicit enlightenment. There were so many questions to ask and no one to answer them.

One evening in October or November, 1875, he was

walking up and down an avenue of eucalyptus trees on the school grounds at Burwood. A thousand locusts sang the chorus of his meditations. What was the meaning of this storm in his soul, why all of this reticence about sex, why all of this vague talk about sin? Then and there he made up his mind to devote himself to the study of the matter, in order to save other young people from the perplexities which tormented him! He would explore the dangerous ocean of sex and perhaps find for humanity an Earthly Paradise!

Thus Henry interpreted his own motives, but they were not all so philanthropic. Far more than he could have suspected he was driven by libidinous urges to seek sublimated food. He was a chaste young Faust lured by forbidden realms. In the hidden recesses of his mind he was exchanging Jehovah for Aphrodite. Yet these facts in no way militate against the sincerity of his naïve explanation, and certainly he was far less self-deceived than the ordinary youth who travels the forest in perfect blindness.

The far-flung schemes of adolescence are often little more than laughable, but here was the decision of a sixteen-year-old, destined to be carried out through a long lifetime. In 1897, Ellis wrote in the General Preface of the first published volume of his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex:* 'The origin of these studies dates from many years back. As a youth I was faced, as others are, by the problem of sex. Living partly in an Australian city where the ways of life were plainly seen, partly in the solitude of the bush, I was free both to contemplate and to meditate many things. A resolve slowly grew up within me: one part of my life-work should be to make clear the problems of sex. That was more than twenty years ago. Since then I can honestly say that in all that I have done that resolve has never

been very far from my thoughts.' And in 1926 he remarked, apropos of that same resolve: 'I am sure I never for a moment anticipated that my efforts in that direction would arouse so wide an echo in the world.' [1]

What did it mean in 1875 for a boy of sixteen to dedicate himself to the study of sex? If now the subject is suspected, then it was violently condemned as 'unpleasant,' 'vicious' and 'disgusting,' attracting the attention only of 'impure' minds. In the 'realistic' novels of Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot, it was touched with triple gloves. Behind the general taboo was a vague conception of 'the normal sexual life' which all respectable people *instinctively* lead and do not talk about; the abnormal perversions were exhibited by a small minority of hopeless degenerates with whom the good person had nothing in common. Sex was an unhealthy, pathological subject fit only for the medical scavenger.

This belief seemed to be established by the early investigators who wrote almost exclusively about sexual anomalies. Lowenstein in 1823, Haussler in 1826 and Kaan in 1844, published books on perversions as purely morbid phenomena. Between 1860 and 1880 homosexuality was carefully studied by several German writers. In 1882 the first edition of Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* appeared, and for years afterward he dominated the entire field of sex as one vast clinic where 'no helpful or progressive activities were possible. Sexual science meant for the most part a subdivision of psychiatry; the vague doctrine of "degeneration," useful when first introduced, was regarded as the key to unlock all doors, while the normal psychology of sex was usually dismissed — when it was mentioned at all — in a few perfunctory lines.' [2]

[1] Letter, June 27, 1926.

[2] Havelock Ellis: 'The Institute of Sexual Science.' *Medical Review of Reviews*, March, 1920.

Among the pioneers of modern psychology, sex was lightly passed over by Helmholtz, Fechner, Wundt and Galton, highly repugnant to Charcot and somewhat distasteful to William James. Schrenck-Notzing, 'the founder of modern sexual science,' according to Iwan Bloch's exaggerated estimate, brought out his first studies in the late eighties. Freud did not see the primary importance of sex until about 1890, after he was thirty. The main work of Bloch, Bolsche, Forel, Hirschfeld and the psychoanalysts has appeared in this century. The unique character of Ellis's resolution back there in the school-yard of Burwood, and his subsequent scientific career, could best be appreciated in the light of a thoroughgoing history of modern sexology, but unfortunately there is no such book in existence. As his curiosity about the subject was aroused by typical adolescent problems, he always planned to deal with the more ordinary manifestations of sex, realizing, of course, that a comprehensive investigation would inevitably involve the perverse. Yet in spite of his clear statements to this effect, in spite of the fact that most of his *Studies* are not clinical, he has the reputation of being chiefly interested in sexual aberrations. A noted biologist writes privately that he has not read Ellis's books because of a distaste for 'pathological literature.' This point is stressed here for the sake of historical accuracy, not because Ellis the psychologist has any shame in being also a psychiatrist. The sharp distinctions between the normal and the abnormal disappear as we find that the normal state is largely an ideal to be approximated, whereas the so-called abnormal is common to us all. In the words of Conrad Aiken, 'Whoso among you that is without insanity, let him think the first think.'

To go back now to Henry at Burwood, near Syd-

ney, at the end of 1875. He was still curious to see that sex book which Dr. Nichols had attacked, in Comstockian fashion, without mentioning its name. With the help of Providence Henry suddenly discovered it one day in the window of a book store.

The Elements
of
Social Science;
or
Physical, Sexual and Natural Religion.

An Exposition of the true Cause and only Cure of
The Three Primary Social Evils:
Poverty, Prostitution and Celibacy.

by

A Doctor of Medicine.

This forgotten book, never well known even to the intelligentsia, has appeared in nearly every European language and was one of the most influential documents of the nineteenth century. Its author was a young Scotch physician, George Drysdale, who was born in 1825 and died in 1904; but his name never appeared on the title-page during his lifetime, at first because he did not wish to offend his mother and later because he wished to avoid personal controversy. The first edition was published in 1854, by Edward Truelove, the much enlarged third edition the month of *The Origin of Species* and was consequently the more overlooked in the turmoil caused by Darwin's work. But by 1880 there were six German editions of *The Elements of Social Science*, four Italian and several French. The twenty-fifth English edition, 1886, began the sixty-first thousand. Drysdale spent his long life in sowing the world with his book and putting it into

foreign translations. In 1877, his brother, Dr. C. R. Drysdale, founded the Neo-Malthusian League, which began the organized movement for birth control.

It is impossible to summarize *The Elements of Social Science* which became a volume of six hundred long pages, and contained numerous brilliant anticipations of the most recent developments in psychology and moral speculation. 'The hope of man lies in a nutshell; they are all comprehended in the question of questions — IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE BOTH FOOD AND LOVE? Is it possible that each individual among us can have a due share of food, love and leisure? in other words, is it possible to reconcile the antagonism of the two laws of nature and to escape from the horrors of mutual destruction?' The single answer to all these questions, Drysdale maintained, was Preventive Sexual Intercourse. It is the answer of countless others to-day. But Drysdale was not merely an honest propagandist elaborating a pet thesis; he was a trained scholar, rich in insights. He elaborated on the physical and mental dangers of repressed impulses fifty years before Freud announced the doctrine of repression. He argued that there were as yet no psychologists or moralists worthy of the name because they had not extended their investigations into the fundamental roots of comparative psychology. He saw that sex was to be a central issue of the coming century, that love is a necessity rather than a luxury, and that moral virtues are in the last analysis matters of mental hygiene. Many of his assertions were undoubtedly unscientific and extravagant, but the majority of them were based on sound economic, medical and psychological findings, and his general programme appears even more rational to-day than when originally laid down in 1854.[1]

[1] Cf. Margaret Sanger: 'The Vision of George Drysdale,' in *The Birth Control Review*, July, Aug., Sept., 1923.

The Elements of Social Science Henry devoured before his seventeenth birthday, and wrote about with a quiet boldness which set the tone for his entire career.

'I have observed that there are few questions which I ever took the trouble to investigate and study both sides of the question but what I came to a conclusion totally opposite to the orthodox one which I have always been taught to believe true. So it was with regard to a large number of questions relating to religion, so it has been in respect to development and other allied scientific theories and so now with regard to the sexual question both physically and socially; that is in its relation to the individual and to society. In coming to all these conclusions, I have not, I know, been actuated by the spirit of opposition or the wish to have out of the way opinions; and in no case is it because, consciously or unconsciously, because they have gratified my own desires. On the contrary they have served to overturn the bases of all the opinions in which I have been brought up in, in many cases I have been convicted [*sic*] in spite of myself, in fact they have made me miserable both on account of myself and on that of others. This book is mentioned, not by name however, in Dr. Nichols' Physiology, and seeing it in a shop-window in Sydney I somehow or other devined [*sic.*] it to be the work probated by Dr. Nichols and purchased it. The author is of the opinion that all the evils of society are owing to the sexual question or rather questions, for they are many and he makes out a very good case. The book treats firstly of the physical sexual diseases and then of the moral, then of the question of population, giving the greater part of the Malthus' "Essay on Population" explaining the intimate relation of the sexual difficulty and poverty, prostitution etc. and then he proceeds to expound his

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OPENING PAGES OF HENRY'S COMMENT ON 'THE ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE'

cure of which more anon. The last part of the work added afterward gives the fundamental propositions of Political Economy apparently chiefly taken from J. S. Mill. From what our Doctor of Medicine says I gather that the views of Malthus are those now held by all political economists. Malthus showed irrefragibly [*sic*] that population increases normally at a vastly greater rate than food possibly can and that certain checks are everywhere at work to keep the population down to the limited supply of food; the chief of these checks are famine and plague, celibacy and preventive sexual intercourse. Malthus decided for celibacy, but as our doctor of medicine shows love is not a mere luxury; it is a necessity; and if we adopt the check Malthus advocates then we must put up with a vast amount of evil from prostitution and its attendant evils and also with the still greater train of miseries owing to want of sexual intercourse, among which our writer believes are spermatorrhœa in the one sex and hysteria in the other; wherefore, and as far as I can see the reasoning is perfectly just all along, we are compelled to resort to the preventitive intercourse check and this the writer earnestly advocates and fully explains. He shows that this check is greatly practised on the continent especially in France and that to this cause the comparative state of comfort of the French lower classes is attributable. He justifies its unnaturalness by its necessity and shows how it may be best practised. It is the opinion of some writers on physiology that the law of exercise does not apply to the sexual organs; our writer is of opinion that this is a fatal error and shows how instrumental sexual intercourse has been and is daily to those suffering from spermatorrhœa, hysteria, chlorosis, and a diseased state of the menstrual functions; although at the same

time it cannot be denied that thousands possess their physical and mental powers in full vigour who have never exercised their sexual organs in any way. This is totally opposed to all our generally received views, among the people that is, on the subject — a state of things this writer attributes in great measure to the Hebraic element in the Christian religion — and before this practice can be generally adopted it must receive the greatest opposition from concealment, from ignorance of the issue involved, and unfortunately still greater obstacles from religion. The doctor of medicine is not of opinion that preventitive intercourse should be exclusively adopted; he wisely holds that the rearing of two, or at most, three children, is necessary to woman's health. Dr. Nichols holds some sensible opinions on many questions, though he does not go so deep in the subject as this book does. I intend to procure his Esoteric Anthropology and look forward with interest to see what opinions he expresses on that subject. The doctor of medicine is a very poor writer; his opinions are much sounder, I believe, than Dr. Nichols' but he is a much worse writer. The language is extremely weak barren and conventional; and there is not a single passage with any beauty or force of expression in the book.'

In *The Elements of Social Science* Henry found solid support for his own grave convictions regarding the importance of sex, as well as the germs of most of the ideas about sex that he was to meet with in the future. He became a believer in 'family limitation' nearly two years before the Bradlaugh-Besant trial brought the attention of all Great Britain to the population problem. He might now be inclined to temper somewhat his youthful comments on Drysdale's book, but he would not need to retract them, for they anticipate in

detail some of his most recent articles. He found its pedestrian, 'materialistic' tone painful, but its substance sunk deeply, pervasively, into his thought.

Henry was not yet seventeen. It was less than eight months since he had left England, less than a year since he had read Renan with dismay and *Festus* with ecstasy. In that brief space his mind had leaped ahead years. He had caught the spirit of Rabelais and entered the field of sex. He was leaving God for the sake of Man.

CHAPTER IV

LOST IN THE COSMIC FACTORY

SCHOOLMASTER at sixteen, on his own resources six thousand miles from home, Henry was having maturity thrust upon him. He had passed the equator and the shadow line in the same voyage. Life was to become less earnest, perhaps, but much more puzzling, and he never appeared really boyish again. In those first weeks at Burwood he himself began to appreciate the change: 'The novels of Scott are books that have always had a charm for me. I first became acquainted with them at the age of 12 (I think) when I read "Woodstock" and "Old Mortality." Now I am 16 and have read the greater part of Scott's novels (as well as his poems), many of them indeed three or four times over. My tastes are now altering or rather widening, my circumstances now place a greater variety of books at my command and I think it probable that The Pirate may be the last of Scott's I shall read for some time. Such being the case and having a short time this afternoon at my disposal I felt impelled to write a little of my ideas concerning Scott and his works.' He agrees with Professor Morley that they are 'a healing power of nature' primarily, for as works of art they lack variety and speed. They are also characterized by 'the most natural purity — I do not say strict or scrupulous purity, because it is a healthy purity — not a maudlin purity; and the more complete for being so.' Scott's tender scenes are extremely pleasing, especially in contrast to the harrowing exhibitions of more modern writers. After a final paragraph on some particular heroines the comment ends, 'But the time is up now,

and I must conclude these remarks, desultory and commonplace beyond what I intended.'

After thus dismissing Scott, Henry turned naturally to George Eliot, who fifty years ago was an advanced figure, not considered proper for schoolboys. 'For some time I have been looking forward to making the acquaintance of G. Eliot's works, none of which I had ever read, but I never came across any. However, in my now more affluent circumstances, I conceived that, as there appeared no other expedient and acting in accordance with Ruskin's advice, never to read borrowed books, I might make myself the possessor of one by purchase. Which accordingly I did, and as Mr. Collier pronounced "Adam Bede" to be her finest production — not that I attach great importance to his opinion, but more valuable authority being absent — I trusted to his dictum and procured this work which I have now read.' Henry was most impressed by the fact that the devout character of Dinah Morris was actually painted by the translator of Strauss's *Leben Jesu*, a personal disciple of Herbert Spencer and a follower of Auguste Comte. In this achievement, declared Henry, she exhibited the highest of artistic qualities — objectiveness, the utter absence of the writer's individuality. 'And she gives expression to an idea, the truth of which fastened on my mind like lightning. In regard to beauty I had always been content to hold the view expressed by Spenser in his magnificent Hymn to Beauty, that beauty of face is only a mirror of beauty of soul. And these words struck me as a revelation. "Beauty has an expression as far above the one woman's soul that it clothes as the words of genius have a wider meaning than the thoughts that prompted them; it is more than a woman's love that moves us in a woman's eyes — it seems to be a far off mighty love that

has come to us and made speech for itself there," etc. There are also some fine remarks on the Dutch style of painters to which she compares her own work.'

Hitherto Henry's reading had been carried on under very limiting circumstances, but in Sydney he found new and second-hand book stores and an excellent Public Library with many open shelves for browsing. In the course of the next three years he enjoyed a small income and books were practically his only expense. Twenty years were to elapse before he was able to buy them so liberally again. Not long after arriving in Sydney he went to the Public Library to begin preparation for his work on Rabelais. But he soon found out that the preliminary study would itself be the work of a lifetime. Then he chanced to light upon the paragraph about Rabelais in Coleridge's *Table Talk*, and he realized, 'with an unforgettable thrill of joy,' that he was not alone in the discovery which he had dreamed of communicating to the world. So dissolved his first serious literary scheme.

Toward the end of 1875 he began a series of Commonplace Books which were continued regularly until 1885. They comprise six medium-sized volumes, averaging about three hundred pages each. All but the latter half of the sixth volume are filled with carefully written quotations, chosen from the bulk of his reading during that decade, exclusive of poetry and fiction. There are one thousand and thirty-nine separate passages, from a few lines to ten or fifteen pages in length, with occasional comments by Henry himself. Like his earlier 'Index Rerum,' it is an amazingly heterogeneous collection, resembling Coleridge's curious Note Book [1] of 1795–98. Literature, religion, anthropology, history, psychology, physiology, music and statistics all have

[1] Cf. J. L. Lowes: *The Road to Xanadu*, 5–6.

recognition. A passage on Shelley's death adjoins quotations from Galton's *English Men of Science*, Fichte and Rabelais fall side by side, as do the Hebrew Cosmogony and Messalina, Beethoven's quartettes and youthful pregnancy, Heine's life and unusual retention of urine. In Ellis's most productive period this vast flood of information moved below the surface, to widen the current of his conscious thought.

Volume I of the Commonplace Books begins with a sentence from Bacon's essay, *Of Vanity in Religion*. 'A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree.' Henry added: 'F. W. Robertson formulates this into a kind of law, stating that the reconciliation of two apparently opposing principles is not to be found in some compromise half-way between them, but in a higher truth embracing both. But of course that goes much farther than Bacon. See Robertson's Sermons and other writings.'

This notion of reconciling opposites became a passion with Ellis and one of the most outstanding characteristics of his work. He has been, like Remy de Gourmont, almost incapable of taking sides in capital issues, for he has seen that men are usually right in their affirmations; and only wrong in their denials. He has had supreme delight in breaking down dilemmas,[1] in collecting specimens of the either-or fallacy. Consequently he has written most successfully on such subjects as sex, morals, mysticism and science, socialism and individualism, Casanova, Zola, Nietzsche and Rousseau, for it is precisely such subjects that force most minds to extreme positions. This harmonizing

[1] Cf. *Affirmations*, 2d edition, 34.

ideal of thought is rarely achieved and totally foreign to hasty youth, obsessed with clarity and certitude. Henry first found it enunciated probably in the *Sermons* of Robertson of Brighton, the eloquent divine who was much influenced by Hegel. He died prematurely in 1853, but five volumes of his sermons, published posthumously, were extremely popular. More readable than most writings of that sort, they disclose a deep spirit of toleration and the constant desire to avoid unnecessary antitheses. Imperceptibly they helped young Ellis toward the peaceful marriage of Heaven and Hell.

Another striking passage early in the Commonplace Books has to do with William Hutcheson, one of the first moderns to insist on the connection between ethics and æsthetics. Henry had been raised on the Hebraic-Christian teaching that virtue is obedience to certain traditional commands, but in his wider studies he discovered that the good life may be considered a delicate, difficult art, to which no rigid rules are applicable. He learned to give up severe moral judgments in order to gain æsthetic understanding — and no other change of attitude is so thoroughly revolutionary. 'William Hutcheson, the Scotch philosopher, proclaimed the doctrine of the gratification of the natural desires before Goethe penned the closing sentence of Bekenntinisse einer schonen Seele in Wilhelm Meister. "Ich solge mit freiheit meinen Gesinnungen und weis so wenig von einschrenkung als von Reue." (6th book "Wilhelm Meister.") Hutcheson declares that "the chief happiness of any being must consist in the full enjoyment of all the gratifications his natural desires are capable of." Elsewhere in his "Moral Philosophy" he writes, "The highest sensual enjoyment may be experienced by those who employ both body and mind

vigorously in social, virtuous offices and allow all the natural appetites to recur in their due seasons. . . . Nay, as in fact, it is for the good of the system that every desire and sense natural to us, even those of the lower kinds, should be gratified as far as their gratification is consistent with the nobler enjoyments and in a just subordination to them, there seems a natural notion of right to attend them all."' [1]

While busily absorbing such ideas Henry became convinced that he was too ill-fitted for regular teaching at Burwood and gave up the position after three months. Early in 1876 he went as tutor to a family in Carcoar, a straggling agricultural settlement one hundred and seventy miles west of Sydney. There he instructed four lively youngsters (while only seventeen himself), worked hard on German, wrote frequent letters to the family at home and to MacKay, took voluminous notes on his reading, experimented in verse and suffered from the first shocks of religious disillusion. By this time he had given up the idea of an early return to England and was determined to take full advantage of his stay in Australia. It was the best thing that ever happened to him, he himself has always believed. The most crucial years of his life, forty months, between sixteen and twenty, amid silent undemonstrative farmers and the weird beauty of the bush. It was his closest companion, in harmony with his reticence, strengthening his isolation, sinking deeply into his blood. With quiet tenacity he was working out his own salvation better than he knew. A tall, spare youth, book in hand, on long walks across the low hills. Those scenes are among his richest memories in the latter years. Here is his own description, written at Paris, in the summer of 1903: 'A land in which the predominant

[1] The source of this quotation is not given.

tree, the eucalyptus, has the fantastic habit of shedding its bark in great sheets, and where man has rendered these trees over vast acres still more uncanny by ring-barking them to death, a land in which the cries of birds and other living things are for the most part shrill or mournful, and where the appearance of the animals as well as of the trees is peculiar and primitive to an extent unknown elsewhere, is a land that may well seem hideous and melancholy to those who arrive in it as exiles from home, or even to its own children in the impatient eagerness of youth. And yet, the Australian bush is full of exquisite beauty. One who comes to it, not as an unwilling exile, but content to live for six months at a time without approaching within twenty miles of the little townships, which are themselves only about the size of small English villages, learns to see its gracious beauty better than its sadness. The gently undulating hills bathed in eternal sunshine and peace, the exhilarating air, the loveliness of spring when the wattle — the Australian acacia — flings its trailing golden blossoms over the land, the strange exotic products of this primitive continent, all these things have a life-long charm for one to whom they have once revealed their beauty.' [1]

At Carcoar, as throughout his stay in Australia, Henry had no close friends and teaching was always repugnant to him. Consequently he continued to be unusually intimate with literary creations and felt personally obliged to their authors for helping him. For some months his heart was lost to Charlotte Brontë's Shirley, in the novel of that name. 'It is a long time since I have been so interested — so excited I was going to write — as by this. I have read The Professor

[1] 'Fiction in the Australian Bush,' *The Weekly Critical Review*, Sept. 17, 1903.

and did not think particularly highly of it, but with this I have been delighted; and it has given me a very high opinion of Charlotte Brontë. I don't mind acknowledging that to me a good novel is a very great treat; and also that I have learnt more lessons — both in heart and head — from novels than from any other species of composition. After reading a good novel — and this is a very good one — I feel better, in a healthier frame of mind, and I'm not ashamed to say, I learn to correct many modes of feeling or thinking or acting. When I read a novel I cannot help identifying myself with the characters portrayed involuntarily. I find myself picking out those traits of character which I recognize as my own and separating them from those that are not. . . . I should have hardly thought — I don't know why — a woman could have conceived such a character — I love and reverence Miss Brontë in doing so. I don't think I ever came across so perfect a representation of my own ideal of what the woman I would love must be; and with pleasure would I continue my present occupation of tutor till like Louis Moore I could gain such a treasure — disagreeable as it would be. Shirley is my own ideal, not omitting her faults even, but with a vividness and life I could never have infused. But I must close; it's getting on for 11 P.M.'

Henry's belief in the novel came to be of great service to him, for it is probably the most original and representative of living arts, and certainly one of the most fertile fields in which a student of psychology or morality can delve. Nietzsche, anticipating so many discoveries of a later generation, declared that Dostoievsky was the only psychologist who could help him, and next in value placed Stendhal. The hint is taken by the psychoanalysts while their suspicious

critics go on cultivating sterile ground. Academic works on the problems of conduct are, generally speaking, unreadable — the same old juggling of empty abstractions with no attention to fresh, vital materials. One exceptional professor, Warner Fite, remarks, 'I have heard of moralists who never read novels. I wonder how they could expect to have much to say on the subject of morality.' [1] In October, 1923, Ellis wrote: 'I am no devourer of novels. I approach them with many precautions. For the most part I have found Cervantes and Fielding, Tolstoy and Flaubert, Stendhal and Proust, Hardy and Conrad and Régnier enough — sometimes more than enough — for me, except when the curiosity of novelty leads me to try little-known books, or some friend writes a novel in which I hope to find at all events a congenial human document. But the Brothers Karamazov I feel as though I could read again and again, almost, I was about to say — but that would be excessive — as I feel about Wilhelm Meister.' [2]

Ellis might have enlarged that list considerably, but it contains most of his chief favorites and represents a far wider range than would be covered by his professional colleagues who prefer to read each other. At seventeen he began on *Wilhelm Meister*, very slowly at first, partly on account of his deficient knowledge of German, and has never quite reached the end. In that prose epic he could contemplate his own development impersonally. Wilhelm also went out to seek his father's asses and found a kingdom. Wilhelm also learned that of the two processes of self-education the one he carried out for himself was by far the more important. From this period Goethe was for Ellis a vast consolation and support rather than a new force. What

[1] *Moral Philosophy*, 17. [2] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 194.

was germinating within himself he saw expressed in Goethe, a big elder brother who had already done superbly what he was trying to do. 'His vision of the world always came to me as natural, as something that I knew already, although I had not quite definitely realized that I knew it.' Ellis was not offended when some reviewer declared that 'that colossal sentimentalist' stalked through the whole of his first book, *The New Spirit.* It was a kind of indirect compliment, for he had hardly mentioned Goethe's name. 'May my guardian angel continue to preserve me from writing about Goethe,' [1] exclaimed Ellis a few years ago. No other human being has inspired in him such complete awe and reverence and he refuses to attempt 'the supreme, unscaled Mount Everest' which has destroyed so many bold explorers.

To-day in Ellis's Brixton flat Flaubert's picture has the second place in the small private gallery. 'I have been reading his Correspondance — to say nothing of the other books which I have known more or less since I was seventeen — for the past ten years and with a joy that never fails.' [2] Since he first devoured that copy of *Madame Bovary* which he picked up one day in Sydney, Flaubert has aroused his profound admiration, almost worship *as an artist.* Ellis has in no way tried to imitate the great Frenchman (or any other author) — his style is less marmoreal and his general outlook much less severe; but there are many common bonds between them — a similar interest in thorough documentation and the avoidance of hasty work, the same fine art of disinterested analysis in ambiguous realms, the same feeling that moral conclusions are usually vulgar weapons, and for both *le grotesque triste* has a most wonderful charm.

[1] *Impressions and Comments,* III, 53.

[2] *Ibid.* 231.

Meanwhile, Henry has been six months at Carcoar, carrying on his various duties and preparing to matriculate at the University of Sydney. In June he went in and passed satisfactorily the usual examinations, except for Greek, from which he was excused because he had been unable to secure for study a copy of the assigned book, two orations by Demosthenes. As result of that accident, perhaps, Ellis has never had more than a slight knowledge of Greek and Greek literature has played no great part in his reflections. The point may be insisted upon because of the careless way we now apply the epithet 'Hellenic' to any elastic personality. Ellis's affinities are with French, and broadly speaking, with Latin culture, and Lucretius has meant more to him than any Greek author.

In the twelve or fifteen months after leaving England his religious beliefs melted away without his realizing what was happening, until suddenly he found himself in a godless universe. It was a fearful change made more extreme by his southern loneliness. However much he was absorbed in his tutoring and studies there would come periods of gray helplessness bordering on absolute despair. In the background of Australia's loveliness stretched an arid country of the mind which he could not entirely forget.

Henry had carried a simple, confident theology into his sixteenth year. Then hastening adolescence was reënforced by a voyage half round the world, a wide range of reading and the novelty of living on a strange continent. He became occupied with some of the most basic questions in sexual morality, working out by himself highly advanced solutions. He was soon so far beyond the confines of the old dogmas that it was impossible to return. As a matter of fact he was too much thrilled at first by his new discoveries to be fully aware

of what he was leaving behind. And why worry at all when great writers were saying on all sides that theology was a thing of the past, that science was the religion of the future! At this point Henry read an enormously popular book which seemed to be the last word in human wisdom, Mathilde Blind's translation of *The Old Faith and The New*, by David Friedrich Strauss. In the twilight of his career the heroic author of the *Life of Jesus* had attempted to put in concentrated form the new gospel of western culture, the definitive credo of the scientific triumph. With progress inevitable and the great truths discovered he felt that the world was waiting for such a statement, concluding in a latter-day trinity of 'universal law,' German music and German poetry. 'We demand the same piety for our Cosmos that the devout of old demanded for their God.' All honest men needed but to open their eyes in order to be persuaded: 'In the enormous machine of the universe, amid the incessant whirl and hiss of its jagged iron wheels, amid the deafening crash of its ponderous stamps and hammers, in the midst of this whole terrific commotion, man, a helpless and defenceless creature, finds himself placed, not secure for a moment that on an imprudent motion a wheel may not seize and rend him, or a hammer crash him to powder. This sense of abandonment is at first something awful. But then what avails it to have recourse to an illusion? Our wish is impotent to refashion the world; the understanding clearly shows that it indeed is such a machine. But it is not merely this. We do not only find the revolution of pitiless heels in our world-machine, but also the shedding of soothing oil. Our God does not, indeed, take us into his arms from the outside, but he unseals the well-springs of consolation within our own bosoms.'

For Professor Friedrich Nietzsche, aged thirty, *The Old Faith and The New* was the signal for one of his most brilliant and annihilating attacks. Strauss became the incarnation of 'the Philistine of culture' and his well-intentioned book the 'vicious gospel of comfort.' It was not details that Nietzsche damned so much as the dead level of it all, and not so much the final testament of an exhausted scholar whom he had at one time highly respected, as a whole nation's acquiescing in complacency. 'The Straussian Philistine harbours in the work of our great poets and musicians like a parasitic worm whose life is destruction, whose admiration is devouring, and whose worship is digesting.' [1]

What Nietzsche deplored most was the effect which Strauss's work would have on the youth of Germany. 'Unto him who would fain help this coming generation to acquire what the present one does not yet possess, namely, a genuine German culture, the prospect is a horrible one. To such a man the ground seems strewn with ashes, and all stars are obscured; while every withered tree and field laid waste seems to cry to him: Barren! Forsaken! Springtime is no longer possible here! He must feel as young Goethe felt when he first peered into the melancholy atheistic twilight of the *Système de la Nature*; to him this book seemed so grey, so Cimmerian and deadly, that he could only endure its presence with difficulty, and shuddered at it as one shudders at a spectre.' [2]

Whatever Nietzsche might have said about it, Henry at sixteen was in no position to criticize so clear and plausible a book. It was obviously honest and seemed to tell the whole story. However drab the new faith, the sincere individual must try to accept it with-

[1] *Thoughts out of Season*, Eng. trans., I, 41–42. [2] *Ibid.* 58.

out a qualm, and at first Henry succeeded admirably. Here and there in the first Commonplace Book are scattered references which show that he regarded Strauss as a kind of ultimate authority. After a summary of Channing's statement of Milton's religious views there is a supplementary note: 'Leaving aside the manner in which M. arrived at this opinion, it is highly interesting to know that Milton was — to use Strauss terms — on the side of monism against dualism.' Under 'Fichte's definition of God': 'Fichte defines God as the moral order of the universe. Strauss considers this partial, Fichte not recognizing Nature. (The Old Faith and The New.)' In number 219, following a quotation from Strauss who appeared to underestimate, on evolutionary grounds, the importance of physical enjoyment, Henry remarks: 'This argument against sensualism, of a rather cosmical nature, struck me on first coming across it. On reflection, however, I find its force rather weakened. I don't think it is true — assuredly it is *not* true — that the sensual enjoyments have been exhausted in the animal kingdom, and even if it were so, I am afraid this argument would influence few of us. The dogmatic way in which Strauss speaks in the latter portion of the passage I have quoted, of repressing sensualism, as if that were a light thing to do, is scarcely, I think, so rational as Strauss generally is. Indeed few do speak rationally on this subject!'

The last shred of Henry's orthodoxy dropped away as he made his obeisance to Strauss. A process that had been going on imperceptibly, for some months at least, was thereby completed. The experience was by no means entirely painful, for he was now rid of many useless trappings and had a sense of being in agreement with the most progressive thought of the day. At Car-

coar in July, 1876, he tried to express his new faith in an austere hymn which was never completed.

Westward the grey clouds draw
To the death of a golden day.
Mingles the light of stars and sun.
Now let us pray.

In this so shadowless light,
Passionate dawn of stars and night,
By the cold silent grace of day,
Pray we for light.

Light not of moon or stars;
We pray for no light of the sun;
We pray for that orb whose grand course
Is still to run

In the soul of man . . .
That he the clear and cloudless noon
Of . . .
May rise too soon.

Do naught but what accords
With science, Nature's brightest light,
And so may reach the paths of truth
From out this night.

As that fair form whose wings
Were made of fire and snow pure white
By Atlas' daughter from which was Hermaphrodite
(So passion and purity be blended in man).

As the novelty of the Strauss dogmas wore off, Henry was left more and more starved emotionally. He could not find much religious satisfaction in 'Haydn quartets and Munich brown beer.' He could not be inspired by the crude mechanical metaphors of eighteenth-century physics. 'I had the feeling that the universe was represented as a sort of factory filled by an inextricable web of wheels and looms and flying shuttles, in a deaf-

ening din. That, it seemed, was the world as the most competent scientific authorities declared it to be made. It was a world I was prepared to accept, and yet a world in which, I felt, I could only wander restlessly, an ignorant and homeless child.' [1]

In the midst of this disillusion Henry became devoted to Shelley whom he read and re-read constantly. Here was poetry which made apostasy triumphant and refused to mourn the death of God. For a year or two he regarded Shelley as the intense Christian regards Jesus, as the Hope of the World, and for the next decade he read everything that he could find, biographical or critical, about Shelley. Still later the poet embodied for Ellis the theory that the person of genius is a combination of man, woman and child, more or less equally fused.

It was also at Carcoar, during Henry's seventeenth year, that he began to put into sonnets some of his most intimate emotions. He confined himself almost exclusively to that form until 1885, when he ceased to write verse entirely, which is sufficient proof that his genius pointed in other directions. The complete series of his sonnets, forty-one in number (including two translations from Heine), were published in 1925 'as an archæological record, interesting apart from any technical quality or the absence of it, the record of personal experiences in the evolution of an individual person's spirit.' 'Taken altogether, it now seems to the writer, this whole group of sonnets lays bare the root of the impulses that have stirred throughout all the activities of his life, from *The New Spirit* in which in 1889, nearly five years after the sonnets ceased, he first put forth his programme, to *The Dance of Life* with which, in 1923, he sought to round it off. Although some of

[1] *The Dance of Life*, 215.

the sonnets were published in magazines and journals soon after they were written, the author wrote them for himself and had no special desire to call public attention to them. When the tree is growing it is just as well not to lay bare the roots; but when growth has probably ceased it is no longer any matter.' [1]

MacKay, who gave Henry detailed criticism on many of the sonnets, once wrote: 'The thoughts that underlie them are good but they struggle for utterance and do not attain to clear expression.' That is quite a fair summary, for the sonnets are not, on the whole, distinguished as poetry, although far above the average effusions of serious adolescence. They suffer from the common effort to compress too much thought and feeling into a small space. Yet they mark crucial steps in their author's development and in the present context must be cited frequently. The first of them was written in July, 1876, just after he had returned from matriculation at the University of Sydney.

THE COMING OF SONG

There was a yearning void within my heart
As with a courage which was half despair,
I strove that I my destiny might bear,
And battled as I might my stormy part;
When One, it chanced, a beauteous form and bright,
With tresses Aphrodite-like mid foam,
Of each white-crested wanton wave the home,
Was borne upon life's sea before my sight.

O, there was that within her eyes to move
My failing soul, and to raise up, like wine
To one who faints, my thoughts to noble deeds.
But when, like Pan, that form to grasp I strove,
Press lip to lip, and limb with limbs entwine,
I found, alas, not Syrinx but the reeds.

[1] *Sonnets with Folk Songs from the Spanish*, ix–x.

The chaos of a fertile, youthful mind. Loneliness, the desert of irreligion, the fearful need for self-expression, sexual imagery, futility. Henry hardly knew where he was going, but he was striving manfully to get there.

After finishing the year at Carcoar, he went at the beginning of 1877 to teach in a small private school at Grafton, a small town three hundred and fifty miles north of Sydney, on the banks of the river Clarence. Soon after his arrival he was placed in charge of the school, on the sudden death of the Head Master, but this was too much responsibility for a youth of eighteen years, and at the end of six months' perseverance he resigned the position to a much older man who made a great success of it.

At Grafton, Henry gave particular attention to his languages, translating Alfred de Musset's *Rolla* and many lyrics of Heine, second only to Shelley in his affections. In July he made an elaborate analysis of *In Memoriam*, treating each canto of the poem separately. It was 'dedicated, not by permission, to Angus MacKay.' Appended to the end was a 'Note intended as Preface.' 'During the last two years I have read "In Memoriam" carefully through some half dozen times. With each perusal my love for it has increased as a poem, a work of art and an expression of religious feeling. I have felt induced to write down briefly what I consider the key-note of each stanza, and have endeavoured to point out a few of the developments in the various ideas and the connections between them which make the poem a complete and harmonious whole. I have also interspersed a few notes of a semi-critical nature. F. W. Robertson has written a somewhat similar analysis with which I have compared mine and to which I am indebted for a few hints.' In connection

with some very anti-French sentiments in cantos 109 and 127 Henry wrote: 'Tennyson, with his Teutonic instincts and tastes, is unmercifully severe against the French. It is pleasant to be able to place against Tennyson's, E. B. Browning's very different estimate (in "Aurora Leigh") of precisely the same points in the French character.' Canto 122 brought forth the following comment: 'In Memoriam may be looked upon as an argument for Christianity; in reality it is only so indirectly by proving the existence of religion, which scarcely needed proving; nevertheless, these words of St. Paul (as R. H. Hutton remarks) express very accurately, putting aside the religious argument, the scope of "In Memoriam" (putting aside the theological aspect) — "knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."'

This was the time of Henry's darkest unbelief and he found a ghost of bitter consolation in Tennyson's confused gropings. At least he was not alone in his sufferings. By investigating such writings he thought that he might be able to return to the old faith on a new plane. Tribulation was forcing patience upon him. His plans were painfully indefinite. He was out of a job. His mother and closest friends were very far away. In some of his verses was a weak, wistful note which showed that his courage was almost at the breaking-point, as in his *De Profundis*, written in September, 1877, shortly before leaving Grafton.

'Like a tired child, I fall and weep
Upon life's path and pray
For some divine, eternal Sleep
To carry me away,

HENRY HAVELOCK ELLIS
1877

With passionless, calm-low bent face,
Kiss me from this world's breast;
— Long and weary is life's race,
And I desire to rest.'

Thus young Ellis trudged the waste land of the modern spirit. He had been faithfully following what seemed to be the path of Truth and found it desolate. He was not one of those healthy, once-born souls, who are saved from the beginning. He had to achieve serenity through sincere, courageous effort. Yet he did achieve it finally, a fact which distinguishes him from many of his great contemporaries who are still wanderers in the wilderness, shaking their fists against an alien sky.

CHAPTER V

CONVERSION AT SPARKES CREEK

HENRY spent the whole of 1878, his nineteenth year, at Sparkes Creek, a microscopic settlement in the Liverpool Mountains, north of Sydney. There he reaped the full value of his Australian experience and planned out his immediate future in England. There he underwent a mental revolution which proved to be the turning-point of his entire life.

On the 7th of July, 1878, he wrote from Sparkes Creek to his cousin, John Ellis:[1] 'I will in default of anything better to say, glance over the way I have been spending my time during the last three years, though there is little to be said. As you probably know I have been occupied first as an Assistant Master (3 months), then as a private tutor in the bush (12 months), after that owing to the sudden death of a Head Master of a school in Grafton, where I had been engaged as Assistant, immediately after my arrival, and to subsequent arrangements, I found myself Head Master. This, however, I found rather arduous work, and at the end of six months for several reasons disposed of my school. After that I was for six months waiting for anything advantageous to turn up, and as that process threatened to be a somewhat lengthy one and had exhausted my financial resources, I offered my services to the Council of Education of the colony as a public school teacher and after undergoing an examination

[1] John Ellis had recently joined the Cowley Fathers, an Anglican monastic organization. Two or three years later he was visited for a few days by his cousin Henry at the house of the Fathers in Oxford. Shortly afterwards, as Reverend John Ellis, he went to a post in India, then to Australia, and they fell entirely out of touch with one another.

and several other preliminaries and managing to escape (owing to my previous experience) the six months training usually required, I was appointed here. I am 200 miles from Sydney and 18 from any town. When I arrived my dismay at the prospect was considerable and I should like to have thrown up the whole affair. There are exactly four families at the place — small farmers — and I am living by myself. I have another school under my charge 3 miles off, separated by a mountain range, and I divide my time between them. I am in complete isolation, but as I rather like the solitude I am quite reconciled to it and with the aid of books pass the time agreeably enough.'

He had reached the head of the little valley on a hot midsummer day, after a ride through the parched, lonely bush with a silent guide. Two drab farm-houses on each side of the dusty road. 'A string of silent pools' bordered by towering gum-trees and grim shea-oaks. A dilapidated cabin which was pointed out as the school. Another homestead farther on. That was the whole of Sparkes Creek. A genial welcome from the farmers might at least have encouraged him, but they seemed almost to resent his coming. Henry was boarded for the night by one of the farmers and then advised to take up his quarters in the schoolhouse as the previous teacher had done. 'It was built of great rough-hewn slabs, some of which were loose and could be moved with slight effort. Inside it had once been papered over, but the paper had mostly fallen away, and here and there were great chinks between the slabs. The place was divided into four compartments, for the two at the back could scarcely be called rooms, though one contained some shelves and a box that held the schoolbooks and registers. The two rooms each opened on to the little verandah. The schoolroom contained a

table, and such desks and forms as were necessary for twelve or eighteen children; here was the fireplace; it was clear the room had served also as his predecessor's kitchen. The other had been his bedroom; it contained two pieces of furniture only, a four-legged stool and, for a bedstead, eight pieces of wood put together so as to sling a couple of flour sacks, forming a kind of hammock; there were also two sacks on the floor.' [1] It was a dreary prospect. He settled down at first out of sheer obstinacy and the pride of youth. He was not the first hermit who had to prepare his own meals and enjoy the riches of solitude.

When Henry rung the rusty, old cow bell on that first Monday morning a dozen youngsters came trooping in to see their new teacher. He was with them three days and then went across the divide to Junction Creek where he taught six or eight more children on Thursday and Friday. The order was reversed the following week, and so on, alternately, through the year. The programme was not strenuous and all the time outside of classes was his own. Soon this novel adventure came to be much more than a proof of his power. He saw it as a desirable mode of existence, devoid of the complicated machinery which so burdens most lives.

At last in excellent health, he had need for only very simple comforts. He found that cooking could be fun and has carried on that fine art to the present time. He looked forward each week to the strenuous walk to the other school. He was free to read and write for hours on end. A large box of books was his one valuable posses-

[1] *Kanga Creek: An Australian Idyll*, 22. This little novelette, Ellis's slightly disguised record of his life at Sparkes Creek, was begun about 1885, finished in 1895 and published in 1922. It is quite reliable as to general background, minor characters and his mental outlook at the time described. But the girl in the story is entirely fictitious, 'a retrospective wish-fulfilment!'

sion. In his pocket was usually a copy of Goethe, Montaigne or Heine. Stendhal's *De l'Amour* shed further light on his principal interest. For weeks the three huge volumes of Buckle's *Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works* delighted him with a mighty flood of concrete information. No one was there to disturb him. No one was there to help him as he pursued his ideas wherever they might lead. It was only some phase of Nature which now and then carried him away from the long track of his meditations. 'Sometimes it was the apple-gums that grew on a slope at one part of his way and were lost in the valley; they soothed him with their large gracious limbs and soft cinnamon bark; and for that day his journey would be swifter. At another time it might be the great slow elastic bounds of a large kangaroo across his path and down into the gully below. On one evening as he came down the ridge, he caught a sudden glimpse of the red roses half hidden in green leaves that grew up the school-house verandah posts and a quick thrill of delight ran through his body.' 'Sometimes the exhilaration of the fresh air and soft distant sky, the silence and isolation of that strange land, wrought in the young school-master's veins to an ecstacy of abandonment. Once he flung himself down beneath a gum-tree with excess of joy in the presence of that glad warm earth, as though he would kiss the whole world.'

'It was by the development of these new channels of sensational and mental activity that the youth lived gladly without human companionship. He united a strong longing for sympathy with an equally strong distrust of his own power to evoke sympathy. This morbid self-scepticism, while it was mistaken for proud reserve, had rendered all approach to the human beings whose love he longed for little more than a prolonged

agony on the threshold of intimacy. At this point of his life he was lifted above the struggles that ended in self-contempt to a new and joyous sphere of freedom.' [1]

Most of the time his intense emotions were asleep, but occasionally that rare calm was shattered by the sexual agonies of adolescence. He might pass in the fields one of the farmer's daughters at work, and the sight of her budding breasts, disclosed for a moment through her coarse costume, would send his brain reeling. He might be reading *Middlemarch* one night, instead of *Shirley*, and have all his pent-up passions become 'incarnated in Dorothea.' Then this adorable creature of imagination would torture her worshipper more cruelly than any Frankenstein's monster. He would cry out on her remoteness. He would anticipate her indifference. He would prophesy his perpetual loneliness. He would rush out into the night, driven by 'the unrest of an animal in pain.'

'Über allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch;
Die Vogelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch.'

It was June of the mild Australian winter, a half year since Henry came to the valley of great myrtles, nearly three years since 'all vestiges of religious faith had disappeared from the psychic surface.' [2] He did not dwell much on the loss. The consolations of the old faith no longer tempted. His interests had become so diverse that religion had ceased to have any special hold on his mind. But the scars of disillusion were still present,

[1] *Kanga Creek*, 27, 28, 29. [2] *The Dance of Life*, 215.

and below the quiet music of a benevolent nature he could hear the roaring wheels of the world-machine. One day he began to read for the second time a book which had left him untouched several months before, *Life in Nature*, by James Hinton. According to a note in his rarely used diary of inner experiences he was 'enjoying Life in Nature.' He was being deeply impressed by Spencer's *Study of Sociology*. He had heard from his mother that he would soon be receiving a note from Reverend Erck, the esteemed Vicar of Merton. That letter would undoubtedly deal with the possibility of his entering the Church, as they had discussed that topic before he went to Australia. In fact he had never considered any other career seriously up to this time. Nor had he renounced it definitely, since his apostasy, for the simple reason that he was fully occupied with other matters. Now the problem was to be forced on his attention. Just where did he stand, after all?

The lively disturbance thus set up in Henry's mind centered around *Life in Nature* which seemed to contain a complete answer to the dark dogmas of Strauss. Hinton (1822–75) was the opposite of the sober German scholar in almost every respect. Trained in medicine, devoted to higher mathematics, the leading aurist of his day, he was continually wrapped up in abstruse speculations. In the line of William Blake, his thought was a splendid medley of science, mysticism, sensuality, orthodox rhetoric and tremendous heresies. By disposition and knowledge he was armed against the mechanistic philosophies which were sweeping the century. 'What is the world that science reveals to us as the reality of the world we see? A world dark as the grave, silent as a stone and shaking like jelly. That the ultimate fact of this glorious world? Why you might as well say that the ultimate fact of one of Beethoven's

quartettes is the scraping of the tails of horses on the intestines of cats.' [1]

Hinton rejected that minute etching of a dead cosmos which was the masterpiece of three centuries. They had taken too literally what were only intellectual constructions. They opposed reflection to emotion in an unjustifiable way. All the richness of life, in consequence, was reduced to naked mathematical terms — the formulæ of mass and length and time. 'Life is not thereby banished from the world; it is but shown to have its seat in that which is not phenomenal. It is a living world which we thus perceive under the appearance of passive forces; of chemistry and mechanism. The authority of our native instincts, the trustworthiness of our deepest feelings, are still maintained; they are restored with fuller sway. Of the two results that seem to follow from the scientific investigation of life — the universality of its presence, and its resolution into dead mechanic force — the former remains a truth, the latter is but an appearance. Life *is* universal: it only *seems* to be mechanical.' [2]

'In the view we thus take many advantages are found. Our thought of nature is at once simplified and elevated. Instead of feeling ourselves to be a fixed centre, before which a mechanical universe marches with dead footsteps, we rise to a conception of a larger and sublimer universe, of worthier ends and grander sweep, upon the tide of which our little lives — nay, man's own larger life is borne; the true order and course of which includes the changing consciousness of man, painting so upon eternity for him a visionary time; which has for one of its least elements the pulsing of his

[1] *The Life and Letters of James Hinton*, 139. Cf. A. N. Whitehead: *Science and the Modern World*, 77.

[2] *Life in Nature*, first edition, 1862, 159.

heart and the throbbing of his brain, which is enriched with all his passion, and bears his life-blood as a drop in its warm bosom; all being faintly imaged to his unperceiving eyes in changing garniture of earth and sky, from year to year.' [1]

Such writing has been disparaged as mystical, sentimental, unscientific, vague. For a sensitive, alienated youth, it might be passionate, intense, lyrical, challenging. For Ellis at nineteen it was a revelation making over everything. Untrained in technical philosophy, he did not grasp fully the somewhat complicated dialectic of Hinton, but welcomed with joy the central thesis which saved him from Strauss's terrifying picture of belts, flywheels and cogs. That difference in metaphor made a difference in worlds, for metaphor is the language of the emotions, and a repulsive one may be accepted but cannot be embraced. Hinton's glowing imagery appealed to the whole of Henry's mind and brought to an end a gradual process of mental readjustment which began with the disintegration of his faith in 1875. The most important event in all his spiritual life was a definite and permanent conversion which occurred about the first of July, 1878. The change was not spectacular, dramatic or public, like a conventional avowal of Christ, and it was not as instantaneous as the language of *The Dance of Life* implies, but went on over a day or two at least. It was a subtle, internal revolution which he appreciated more and more as the years went by.

He wrote of it first to Cousin John, in the letter of July 7th. 'By next Spring I hope to be in England. I shall be sorry to leave Australia, but I am anxious to get home for several reasons. I wish to decide what to do with myself — a question on which I have not

[1] *Life in Nature*, 217.

hitherto had any strong opinions, though I think I begin to see my way a little more clearly now. I had once some idea of entering the Church, but I begin to see now that for several reasons I must definitely abandon that idea; not without regret. But I find my views irreconcilable with a position in the Church, notwithstanding the liberty of prophesying. If I ever did get there I suppose my place would be among those whom you are pleased to call the "Nothingarians."

'My religious views have during the last three years been very unsettled and my task has been to bring them into harmony. Reading and thinking constantly to this end, I believe I have now finally left all doubt behind. The writers whose works have influenced me most are perhaps Carlyle, Goethe, Herbert Spencer, James Hinton. From purely religious writers I never got much assistance. We must all seek the life most in accordance with our spiritual idiosyncrasies. I cannot imagine myself taking a step like that which you have recently taken, but at the same time I think I can to some extent understand and sympathise with it. My own idea of spiritual life is rather that of life for others, the altruistic life.

'I am glad we take a reciprocal interest in each other, though, as you say, the personal knowledge on both sides is small. At any rate, the people who turn their backs on the world and those who can never see anything as the world says they should see it, ought to have something in common, and if there is any common ground between us, I shall be very pleased.'

Two weeks later Henry wrote in his diary: 'And so I am converted,' with a brief explanation that his new mental state was immediately preceded by the reading of Hinton's *Life in Nature* and Spencer's *Study of Sociology* along with the reflections aroused by the cler-

gyman's coming letter.[1] 'But,' he concluded decisively, 'it would be absurd to say that these three things produced a spiritual revolution.' This piece of self-analysis seems to have been due in part to Edith Simcox's *Natural Law* from which he had borrowed the phrase 'spiritual revolution,' as synonymous with conversion. That book contains an excellent discussion of the phenomenon of psychological conversion, pointing out clearly that it need not have any theological reference. Up to this time Henry thought that conversion involved a new set of intellectual convictions, but he learned from Miss Simcox that it was more a matter of the rearrangement of old feelings and beliefs, 'with the supreme result that the universe is apprehended no longer as hostile, but as friendly.' This definition corresponded perfectly with his own recent attainment of emotional harmony, without the addition of any dogmas.

As his new enthusiasm increased with the approach of spring, he wrote a violent, exuberant sonnet in blank verse:

> 'In truth I think that we are very fools
> And blind and deaf, in truth, that we should live
> Within this large fair world with sealèd eyes
> And closed-up ears, constructing, each of us,
> Around his ego, a poor miniature world
> Which is not; seeing not and hearing not
> Sounds sweet beyond all sweetness, loveliness
> Beyond all love, brief sudden gleams of all things,
> In the great world that is.
> O God! O God!
> Thou Light, Thou Love, Thou Loveliness, Thou all!
> The joy, the joy, borne on the throbbing waves,

[1] In the later accounts of the experience Spencer and the clergyman's letter are not mentioned, and to-day Ellis cannot remember being definitely influenced by *The Study of Sociology*; but he does recall being helped at this period by Spencer's *First Principles*.

O universal sum of soul, O God,
Of Thee! To lose ourselves to find ourselves
In music of the surging of that sea!'

In the diary of September 1st, the conversion was simply mentioned as having occurred some months before. The same entry recorded what might be considered another conversion, his sudden decision to study medicine, as the result of reading *The Life and Letters of James Hinton*, edited by Ellice Hopkins. Hinton had begun his medical training as an outlet for excessive mental activity. His more fertile ideas came to birth during a period of comparative solitude in Jamaica and he always considered his professional duties less important than his philosophic investigations. Continually religious, he was continually trying to assimilate the many aspects of modern science. In expressing his intense social consciousness he was often tortured by his 'feeling of isolation and unlikeness to others.' With a keen sense of facing so many of the same personal problems, young Ellis decided to follow in Hinton's footsteps. He did not plan to practice medicine, but thought it the best possible foundation for his future work in sex and to whatever else he should devote himself.[1]

On the 4th of October, 1878, he started a new series of miscellaneous notes, dealing with Swinburne, Life, Genius, Goethe, Heine, Hosea, Sin, God and other related topics. In relation to Swinburne, Ellis remarked that 'Only a very strong root of poetry can flourish in other than theistic or pantheistic soil. Generally an active atheism implies a shallow emotional capacity.'

[1] Sigmund Freud, in his last year at the Gymnasium, made up his mind to study medicine as the result of hearing a public reading of Goethe's beautiful essay on Nature. Most of the course proved uncongenial to him and he went through it in very leisurely fashion, as did Ellis, both taking eight years.

With the same point of view Ellis wrote on Christmas Day, 1914: 'People without religion are always dangerous. For none can know, and least of all themselves, what volcanic eruptions are being subconsciously prepared in their hearts, nor what terrible superstitions they may some day ferociously champion. It has been too often seen.' [1]

On the 6th of October, 1878, the sight of a rosebud suggested to him some general reflections on the evolutionary meaning of beauty: '*Life is the effort of Nature to attain self-consciousness.* Beauty is Nature's one all-embracing law, or a blind impulse, unknown, unknowing. What then is the secret of this movement upward, through so much pain, so much sorrow, this effort forever failing and yet forever successful, this ascension through mollusk, and beasts, and man, that we call life — what is it but the working out of a sudden yearning at the heart of Nature to become self-conscious? And this great sea of life, the bosom of our mother Nature, sending out ripples of loveliness all around in the wantonness of her joyous hearts; and still never forgetting that yearning hidden beneath — are not we borne upon its foremost waves? And all this life of man that we call so unnatural, the law of which is sorrow, sorrow forever clasping a secret joy in its midmost heart, what is it but our Mother slowly, painfully showing to us all the beauty and glory of her — we wayward children? So that the loveliness I see is not the gleam of my own eyes; it is indeed thine, O Mother. Thy unknowingness is greater than our knowing, and of all life, most of all the higher life, is the only law sorrow; on that condition alone any life or joy or knowing possible. And shall it not in the end with life be well?'

Finally, on the last day of October, 1878, Ellis em-

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 63.

phasized explicitly his great debt to Hinton. 'I look upon Hinton as one of the most original figures of this century. His great merit is that he is at the same time a scientific and a religious thinker — and that is a very rare combination indeed. He does not strive to weld together these two elements of science and religion, nor does he merely strive to show, as most people are contented to do, that there is in reality no conflict between them. It is peculiar to his thinking that it is spiritual because it is scientific; he has found religion through science. The way in which he reconciles the "moral reason" as he calls it, with the intellect is, I think, the only possible solution of the problem in the present state of thought. As I understand it, it is something like this. The only world positively known to the Greeks was the sensible world, the world revealed by their senses. They also felt that there was a world of intellect, an intelligible world. But they never found out that the intelligible world had any connection with the sensible world, and the best men among them, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Parmenides, etc., dreamed of it as far away, and let their imaginations run riot among cosmogonical fancies. It was this that induced Socrates to confine himself to the study of ethics as the only knowledge attainable by man. But all this time the human mind was being trained, trained upon Nature, with what glorious results in art we know; trained in accuracy by the growth of the science of mathematics. This process was continued through the Middle Ages in those disputes of Scholasticism which seem to us so useless; and, bye and bye, Copernicus, the first Bacon, Giordano Bruno, arose to show how, in reality, the intelligible world was founded on the sensible world, instead of being a far-away scientific world; or, as we say, to introduce the inductive method. Now, says Hinton,

let us apply this to the relation between the intelligible or intellectual world and the spiritual or moral world. Hitherto we have been doing with the spiritual world precisely what the Greeks did with the intellect, imagining it as something far away and having no foundation on the intellectual world at all. But all this time the moral reason has been trained; trained by the poets since Shakespeare, and by the great modern schools of music, just as with the Greeks and Schoolmen the intellect was being trained. This is a very imperfect attempt to suggest rather than to express this idea in a few words. Hinton not merely gladly accepts all the conclusions of modern science, but it is because he accepts them that he is able to see how the spiritual world has, and must have, its only real basis on the world of science or intellect; and perhaps no one who is not well acquainted with the results of modern science can understand what harmony and glory are thrown on the universe and on the human consciousness by this conception of Hinton's. For my part it has introduced a new element into my whole way of regarding things, and though I am quite unable to accept many of Hinton's favourite ideas, in many ways his thoughts have been of incalculable service to me.'

In 1884, Ellis put into poetic form the main phases of his religious history, which he was able to view somewhat objectively by that time.

THE WAY OF THE BLESSED LIFE

I

'What of the soul that for the mere truth's sake
Let God and Heaven slip to the abysmal sea,
And left, that he might wander aimlessly,
His nets like that old fisher by the lake,
And knew no priceless pearl was his to take,
And drained the cup of sorrow bitterly —

What thing for these things shall he henceforth see?'
So unto Life my guardian-angel spake.

'Do as Thou wilt' (then I who heard him cried):
'O Life, Thou madst me for Thy larger ends,
And crushed my hopes in greater hopes of Thine,
And turned for me earth's water into wine,
I only know I know where nothing tends,
And glory in my faith so satisfied.'

II

And I was still. For after many days,
Falling from deep to deep, ever to meet
The loose sand shifting still from weary feet,
Along the wild strange melancholy ways,
To know at last one has strong wings to raise
And soar with, or for rest, is very sweet.
And then Life's voice spake, and her pulses beat
Throughout my being with what glad amaze:

'Lo, all those blank three years thou wouldst destroy,
With arms that sought to reach great Truth afar,
Yet found her not, I, Life, lay on thy breast;
My pearl was thine own heart's yet unknown guest,
Not hiding in some happy distant star,
And Truth is one with Me and I am Joy.'

III

O Life, O Truth, O Joy, O new-found wings
Of gladness, whereon now I laugh and soar,
Pursuing Hope to heights unseen before!
Along the way my spirit shouts and sings
For wonder at the gifts the young earth brings;
And keen Desire shall follow him no more,
For after Sorrow came to her she bore
Glad angel children from the heart of things.

Lo, I am he that was beforetime hurled
Through shadowy deeps where only death-bells ring,
And only stars that fall are clear to see.
Henceforth I walk in light, O Life, with Thee,
And through my heart upwells that living spring,
Whose waters are the life-blood of the world.

Twenty-eight years after these sonnets, when the natural period of reminiscence was setting in, Ellis began to concentrate again on the religious problem and composed the fullest account of his own conversion. The essay, 'Science and Mysticism,' which was first published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in June, 1913, was embodied in *The Dance of Life* (1923) as 'The Art of Religion.' It is there that he gives the longest account of the conversion. After sketching briefly the steps of his disillusion up to the middle of his nineteenth year he continues: 'I was still interested in religious and philosophic questions and it so chanced that at this time I read the *Life in Nature* of James Hinton, who had already attracted my attention as a genuine man of science with yet an original and personal grasp of religion. I had read the book six months before and it had not greatly impressed me. Now, I no longer know why, I read it again, and the effect was very different. Evidently by this time my mind had reached a stage of saturated solution which needed but the shock of the right contact to recrystallise in forms that were a revelation to me. Here evidently the right contact was applied. Hinton in this book showed himself a scientific biologist who carried the mechanistic explanation of life even further than was then usual. But he was a man of highly passionate type of intellect, and what might otherwise be formal and abstract was for him soaked in emotion. Thus, while he saw the world as an orderly mechanism, he was not content, like Strauss, to stop there and see in it nothing else. As he viewed it, the mechanism was not the mechanism of a factory, it was vital, with all the glow and warmth and beauty of life; it was, therefore, something which not only the intellect might accept, but the heart might cling to. The bearing of this conception on my state of mind is

obvious. It acted with the swiftness of an electric contact; the dull aching tension was removed; the two opposing psychic tendencies were fused in delicious harmony, and my whole attitude towards the universe was changed. It was no longer an attitude of hostility and dread, but of confidence and love. My self was one with the Not-Self, my will one with the universal will. I seemed to walk in light; my feet scarcely touched the ground; I had entered a new world.

'The effect of that swift revolution was permanent. At first there was a moment or two of wavering, and then the primary exaltation subsided into an attitude of calm serenity towards all those questions that had once seemed so torturing. In regard to all these matters I had become permanently satisfied and at rest, yet absolutely unfettered and free. I was not troubled about the origin of the "soul" or about its destiny; I was entirely prepared to accept any analysis of the "soul" which might commend itself as reasonable. Neither was I troubled about the existence of any superior being or beings, and I was ready to see that all the words and forms by which men try to picture spiritual realities are mere metaphors and images of an inward experience. There was not a single clause in my religious creed because I held no creed. I had found that dogmas were not, as I had once imagined, true, not, as I had afterwards supposed, false — but the mere empty shadows of intimate personal experience. I had become indifferent to shadows, for I held the substance. I had sacrificed what I held dearest at the call of what seemed to be Truth, and now I was repaid a thousand-fold. Henceforth I could face life with confidence and joy, for my heart was at one with the world and whatever might prove to be in harmony with the world could not be out of harmony with me.' [1]

[1] *The Dance of Life*, 213–18.

The next important reference to this episode occurs in Ellis's preface to his wife's critical study of Hinton, completed in August, 1916. 'It so happened that, as a youth, a few years after Hinton's death, I chanced to read *Life in Nature*, and the view of the natural world there presented, as at once scientifically explicable mechanism and a satisfyingly beautiful vision, greatly aided me in obtaining a harmonious conception of life and the Universe.'

And now, the last delicate variation of a lifelong theme, written on the 6th of May, 1918. 'Yesterday, here in London, the sky was dark. The rain dropped continuously, one's spirit was dismal. To-day the air has been washed clean, the sky is bright, the trees burst into fresh green. Here, as I sit in the Old Garden, the flowers flash with warm radiance beneath the sun, and I hear the deepest wisdom of the world slowly, quietly, melodiously voiced in the throat of the blackbird. I understand. I see the World as Beauty.

'To see the World as Beauty is the whole End of Living. I cannot say it is the aim of living. Because the greatest ends are never the result of aiming; they are infinite and our aims can only be finite. We can never go beyond the duty of Saul, the Son of Kish, who went forth to seek his father's asses and found a kingdom. It is only so that the Kingdom of Beauty is won. There is that element of truth in the contention of Bergson, no intellectual striving will bring us to the heart of things, we can only lay ourselves open to the influences of the world, and the living intuition will be born in its own due time.

'Beauty is the end of living, not Truth. When I was a youth, by painful struggle, by deliberate courage, by intellectual effort, I won my way to what seemed to be Truth. It was not the end of living. It brought me no

joy. Rather, it brought despair; the universe seemed empty and ugly. Yet in seeking the Asses of Truth I had been following the right road.

'One day, by no conscious effort of my own, by some inspiration from without, by some expiration from within, I saw that empty and ugly Universe as Beauty, and was joined to it in an embrace of the spirit. The joy of that Beauty has been with me ever since and will remain with me till I die. All my life has been the successive quiet realisations in the small things of the world of that primary realisation in the greatest thing of the world. I know that no striving can help us to attain it, but, in so far as we attain, the end of living is reached and the cup of joy runs over.

'So I know at such a moment as this, to-day, as I sit here, alone, in the warm sunshine, while the flowers flame into colour and the birds gurgle their lazy broken message of wisdom, however my life may be shadowed by care, and my heart laden with memories, the essential problems are solved.' [1]

It was a long way from Sparkes Creek to the Old Garden, but the central vision of the pilgrim has not essentially changed. There are marked differences in style, it is true, between the letter to Cousin John and the recent prose-poem, just as the theological terms in the early essays are now supplanted by æsthetic expressions, but in no fundamental sense did Havelock Ellis *develop* after 1878. If this means condemnation, he is willing to confess his guilt. By nineteen his life-work was chosen, his habits of thought established and his attitude toward the universe finally crystallized. Since then he has not suffered from the inner conflict which naïve materialism has sown through modern thought; Hinton cured him of the disease for which the

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 139–41.

present generation is being treated by Whitehead, Dewey and other distinguished physicians. He has not written melodramatic essays about a cruel, ugly Nature. He has not violently opposed science to mysticism nor thought to feeling. For a full half century he has been a gracious anomaly in a sulky world.

Can we shed light on Ellis's conversion beyond giving it another name? — he passed through a crisis, he attained integration, he found himself. We understand it as much or as little as we understand a fundamental change of taste. 'In the last analysis it is itself a change of taste — the most momentous one that ever occurs in human experience.' [1] This change of taste has usually been interpreted from two radically opposite standpoints: (1) The blessed person is instantly made over by the introduction of new and foreign elements; through a wonderful illumination he suddenly becomes aware of some divine truth to which he has been previously blind. (2) The miserable weakling commits spiritual suicide by ceasing to battle a hostile world; conversion is the last compensatory gesture of disillusioned and exhausted natures. Both of these views are a trifle too common and too complete to be quite convincing. Conversion need not be considered a miracle or a surrender. It happens to any one who achieves a degree of internal harmony. It need have no reference to ecclesiastical dogma. The change in focus may be in the direction of atheism, science, art and social reform, as well as of God. The test lies in the new unity and confidence displayed by the individual. Conversion in this sense is most common to the later years of adolescence and represents less 'a protective regression to childhood than the final casting off of childish things.' In primitive communities

[1] J. B. Pratt: *The Religious Consciousness.*

elaborate initiation ceremonies have been employed, from the earliest times, to prepare youth for confronting an austere world. In the same way our modern confirmation rite helps to 'shorten up the period of storm and stress.'

The whole process is well summarized by Ellis: 'A "conversion" is not, as is often assumed, a turning towards a belief. More strictly, it is a turning round, a revolution; it has no primary reference to any external object. As the greater mystics have often understood, "the kingdom of Heaven is within." To put the matter a little more precisely, the change is fundamentally a readjustment of psychic elements to each other, enabling the whole machine to work harmoniously. There is no necessary introduction of new ideas; there is much more likely to be a casting out of dead ideas which have clogged the vital process. The psychic organism — which in conventional religion is called the "soul" — had not been in harmony with itself; now it is revolving truly on its own axis, and in doing so it simultaneously finds its true orbit in the cosmic system.' [1]

Had Ellis not undergone that experience of 1878 he might have become more and more depressed by the foreignness of things. So delicate and mystical a temperament offered fertile soil for *mal de siècle*. Should one say then, that Hinton was literally his salvation? The answer of Ellis is emphatically negative. 'The person in whom "conversion" takes place is too often told that the process is connected in some magical manner with a supernatural influence of some kind, a book, a creed, a church, or what not. I had read this book before and it left me unmoved; I knew that the book was merely the surgeon's touch, that the change had

[1] *The Dance of Life*, 218–19.

its source in me and not in the book. I never looked into the book again; I cannot tell where or how my copy of it disappeared; for all that I know, having accomplished its mission, it was drawn up again to Heaven in a sheet.' [1]

But it is important not to underestimate the surgeon's touch (admitting the crudity of the analogy), for without that influence the arm or jaw might have become seriously deformed if life were not sacrificed. And so in the case of Ellis, he was certainly the seat of the change, but not actually the source. Contact with Hinton's book leaves most people utterly untouched. It was precisely what Ellis needed and conceivably without that contact he would have developed in a very different direction.

In a similar way Spinoza seems to have been crucial in the life of Goethe. Of course, we may easily insist that Goethe was Goethe, a genius from the beginning, and would have flowered under any circumstances. But the question here is the character of that flowering. Bielschowski tells us that Goethe 'was a Spinozist even before he knew anything about Spinoza.' Would he have ever clearly apprehended his own difficulties without the illumination of the *Ethics*? The very incarnation of *Sturm und Drang*, violent, chaotic, ruthless, self-destructive, a long and resplendent career was not assured to Goethe, and his most optimistic friends could have hardly looked forward to it. But then he felt the surgeon's touch!

The crisis of John Stuart Mill is well known. Nearly twenty years of unrelieved education and narrowly intellectual application, a frozen emotional existence — and suddenly a period of overwhelming dejection, which brought him to the verge of suicide. Then

[1] *The Dance of Life*, 220.

Wordsworth's poetry melted the coldness away and acquainted him with 'the very culture of the feelings' which he sought, thereby bringing into existence a developed character in the place of an erudite machine. Some years later there was a young student at the University of Leipzig by the name of Friedrich Nietzsche, lonely, rebellious, melancholy. Wandering through an old curiosity shop one day, he came upon *The World as Will and Idea* by Schopenhauer, and purchasing it suddenly, contrary to the habit that economy made necessary, rushed away to read. It confirmed his loneliness, his fear of the herd's contamination, his tragic sense of life, his austere and passionate honesty. Specific ideas of Schopenhauer did not attract him so much as the total attitude of the man. Later he took great pains to denounce the pessimism and quietism of Schopenhauer, but that did not obliterate the obligation. 'I am far from supposing that I ever understood Schopenhauer; but through him I was able to understand myself alone, a little better; that is why I feel so deeply indebted to him.' [1]

This question of influence is exceedingly delicate and exceedingly obscure. One may want to believe that vigorous genius will fulfil itself completely under any circumstances, but the many possible channels of development are by no means the same, and many of them are certain to be blind alleys. Probably many a man is born to blush unseen because he fails to read his Spinoza or his Schopenhauer at the right time, while another attains the heights because his potential energy happens to be released by favorable contacts. As Freud would say, the accidents of our circumstances are just as crucial as the fatalities of our constitution. The world which owes so much to Havelock Ellis owes a great deal to James Hinton.

[1] Frau Forster-Nietzsche: *The Young Nietzsche*, 314.

Aside from the conversion, the whole stay in Australia was invaluable to Ellis. It gave him a wider horizon, releasing him from that provincial narrowness which a single set of folkways usually produces. It taught him the value of simplicity, that 'sincere and natural asceticism' which is indifferent to so much that the world calls civilization. It deepened his reserve and strengthened his capacity for independence. 'Everyone,' wrote Ellis some years later, 'for some brief period in early life, should be thrown on his own resources in the solitudes of Nature, to enter into harmonious relations with himself, and to realize the full scope of self-reliance. For the man or woman to whom this experience has never been given, the world must hold many needless mysteries and not a few needless miseries.' [1] After those forty months in the bush, Ellis was ready to return to England, with his ego his own, the dauntless free lance whose integrity cannot be violated. He is of those who are born not to be lonely, it would seem, but to be solitary. They are the sublime egotists who act courageously and give themselves prodigally, but retain one jewel unrevealed. Out of the inevitable loneliness of man they mould the superman's self-dependence.

It was in March, 1885, that Ellis wrote the sonnet, 'Isolation,' which he has significantly placed at the beginning of the recent volume:

'From the uneven ground great columns spring
To dim far heights. At vespers or at nones
The one-voiced dialogue in shouts or moans
Through the triforium gloom floats echoing.
No unseen choirs sweet showers of music fling;
Below the altar, on these worn gray stones,
While solemn sacrifice my soul atones,
I serve myself the mass myself must sing.

[1] *The New Spirit*, 91.

Alone I stand, and here forever swing
This censer whence large curls of incense rise
Round clustered pillars to the clerestories.
This side the western door, with offering,
No separate soul my altar may attend:
Alone, apart, I stand until the end.'

The author of this sonnet has declared that 'he has never done an unselfish thing in his life.' [1] Yet it has been a long life of amazing generosity, both private and public. He has lived abstemiously in order to finish his unremunerative works. He is never too busy to do a kindness for a friend or even a remote acquaintance. This altruistic conduct of a Nietzschean personality is also to be explained in part by those Australian years. They protected him from social disillusion and made misanthropy impossible. One who is embittered early is not easily tolerant. Solitude had prepared him for society.

'It is an error to suppose that Solitude leads away from Humanity. On the contrary it is Nature who brings us near to Man, her spoilt and darling child. The enemies of their fellows are bred, not in deserts, but in cities, where human creatures fester together in heaps. The lovers of their fellows come out of solitude, like those hermits of the Thebaid, who fled far from cities, who crucified the flesh, who seemed to hang to the world by no more than a thread, and yet were infinite in their compassion, and thought no sacrifice too great for a Human Being.

'It is known to many that we need Solitude to find ourselves. Perhaps it is not so well known that we need Solitude to find our fellows. Even the Saviour is described as reaching Mankind through the Wilderness.' [2]

[1] Mrs. Havelock Ellis: *Stories and Essays*, II.
[2] *Impressions and Comments*, I, 151–52.

Again it must be emphasized, Ellis is primarily a religious man, and the religious man is profoundly alone. 'Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness.' [1] In exercising his world-loyalty he is unable to take a cheap and easy refuge in the immediate, the local, the purely personal. To ordinary people he is a strange pilgrim who makes them a little uncomfortable, however much they may admire him. Alone, apart, he stands until the end.

Shortly before leaving Sparkes Creek, Henry finished, as his farewell task, an English translation of Renan's dramatic version of *The Song of Songs*. On the 17th of January, 1879, he had his last sight of the beautiful Circular Quay of Sydney. From the middle of his sixteenth year until a few weeks before his twentieth birthday Australia had been his home. She had been the scene of his youth's sufferings and youth's dreams. She had helped him to build up his health and strengthen his mind for notable achievement in a vast competitive world. He was eager to leave her, but he could only go sadly. 'As the ship cut swiftly through the great blue foam-edged waves his thoughts were pressing into the future, reaching forward to the time when, as he could not know, he would look back to the days that were past as to the sweetest things that life could give, when he would thirst for the strange solitudes that the black man has left and the white man has not yet taken for his own, and where the mystery of the early world is still alive, for the great silvery gums bursting out of their tattered garments of bark, for the tremulous fragrant gold of the drooping wattles in spring.' [2]

[1] A. N. Whitehead: *Religion in the Making*, 16.

[2] *Kanga Creek*, 67.

CHAPTER VI

JAMES HINTON'S MANUSCRIPTS

On an afternoon in April, 1879, Mrs. Ellis was sitting with her four daughters in the drawing-room of the new place at Anerley, near the Crystal Palace. They were all nervously expectant. There was a knock at the front door. Mrs. Ellis answered. She returned with a tall, earnest-looking young man, rather colonial in general appearance, with a scraggly, yellow beard and a large, brown ulster. He kissed every one in the room and then nodding toward fifteen-year-old Louie remarked, 'I am sure I have no idea who that young woman is.' She was a mere child when he left and evidently exceedingly mischievous, for occasionally Mrs. Ellis would write to Henry of her difficulty in controlling Louie; to which he once replied, 'Do not worry about Louie, mother. What appear to be vices now will probably be virtues when she grows up.' She became his most intimate companion in the family, proving her devotion in the next few years by copying hundreds of pages into his Commonplace Books, and to the present time she is the sister he sees most frequently.

The young exile was soon thoroughly at home. The simple life in the wilderness has its drawbacks, however much one may condemn some aspects of civilization, and after so long an absence the affectionate attention of four sisters and a lonely mother was very agreeable. The admired centre of that circle through the next nine years, he might have been fatally softened, but he escaped the insidious peril by complete immersion in a maelstrom of bewildering activities.

A few weeks after returning he wrote the following sonnet:

Apart from men I roved among the fields,
Within a world where no thing is yet seems,
Dallied with shadows, fed my heart with dreams.
I sought out all the joys that Nature yields,
Sweet sights and sounds and odours; I saw below
The calm of tropic seas, far skies above,
Felt that full eager rapture of young love
In which our souls are born.

But now I know
That kiss or touch of human lip or hand
Is far diviner yet than these, more grand
The world of men and women. So at length
I see things as they are and yet have hope;
I go into the world with joy and strength;
And there alone my spirit finds its scope.

Ellis is now amazed to recall how much was crowded into that decade between 1879 and 1889. He taught for nearly a year at Clifford House College School, at Smithwick, near Birmingham, in order to secure funds for his medical course, which began in the fall of 1880 and extended, intermittently, to 1889. He took an active part in social movements, read enormously, wrote a number of articles and his first two books, edited several other volumes, went often to theatres, museums, concerts, and picture galleries, made many friendships and carried on a large correspondence. It is necessary to treat separately diverse interests running more or less parallel in his life during this period, and hence the reader must bear in mind that the next three and a half chapters overlap constantly in time.

As a result of his recent conversion he began in 1879 his first original book, a study in the psychology of religion. In preparation he drew up a questionnaire on conversion, along the lines of those used more than a

decade later by Starbuck and other American investigators. Of the book itself he completed only the preface and a very rough draft of chapter one.

PREFACE

'The aim of this little book is to indicate briefly what the place and function of religion are in the world today. We see around us a great deal of religion and a great deal of talk about religion; there are those whose adoration is given to a Great Person; there are those who tell us that religion lies in social duty — that religion is morality tinged with emotion; that religion is admiration; then, finally, those who say that religion is henceforth rendered unnecessary. It is possible to recognise that while each of those views partakes largely of truth, they are at the same time largely admixed with error. Such inaccurate and merely partial assertions cannot command the adhesion of those of us who, while we can no longer give our assent to the old supernatural basis of religion, think also that religion is bound up with all that is noblest in a man's relation to the world. Our greatest scientist is said to have remarked that for his own part he could not see that when we had science and the domestic affections we also wanted poetry and religion. No man is bound to be a poet. But there are some for whom the loss of religion means the loss of all that is finest in their emotional life, who will always sacrifice religion at the call of truth but who can never forget all that that sacrifice implies. It is for these that I have written.'

Defining religion broadly as 'a life that is lived in the soul, as a process of deliverance,' Ellis discussed in Chapter I the nature of 'the intellectual deliverance' or 'regeneration,' manifested particularly by the greater men of science, with their comparative freedom

from prejudice and unusual willingness to *see*. It is only in association with the intellectual deliverance that the modern mind can be healthily religious. But the details of his argument Ellis did not elaborate, for he put the book on religion aside, saying to himself that he would complete it in old age, because it seemed to him that the problem of religion would always be fresh, while there were other problems more pressingly in need of speedy investigation.[1] Had he continued with the original project it seems quite likely that he would have achieved in religious psychology the same high rank that he has been given in sex psychology, as his finished work would have been an important anticipation of James's epoch-making *Varieties of Religious Experience*. In later years Ellis did return to his early theme and wrote *The Dance of Life*, one of the most genuinely consoling books of the generation.

In Australia he had often recalled the wonderful Saint Catherine and his other favorite pictures in the National Gallery, but on going back to see them 'the glory of Rubens suddenly broke on his vision' and he could 'never look again with the same eyes on Raphael.'[2] This was a landmark in his intellectual history, for now he was able to appreciate the technical mastery in pictures of fat ladies which had previously repelled him. Now he was able to see beyond the pictorial function of art to 'the art in painting,' personified by a Rubens who could subdue almost any subject-matter to his ends. From this time, the Royal Academy, that palace of 'art as illustration,' became for Ellis a chamber of horrors, and he avoided entering it. His first article, published in *The Pen*, August 7, 1880, was a well-informed review of C. W. Kett's book on Rubens, which he condemned for describing the man

[1] Cf. *The Dance of Life*, 210. [2] *Impressions and Comments*, I, 28.

and the diplomat to the neglect of the artist. A year or two later he went to Belgium for a short trip with MacKay, Louie Ellis, Miss MacKay and the sisters' two chums. On his visits to the galleries in Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent and Bruges he kept a long series of notes which ended thus: 'On the whole I have seen two things in Belgium, Rubens and the Early Flemish School. In Rubens I saw what I expected to see — no more; but that was very much. In becoming acquainted with the Flemish School I have found a whole new world of art, of whose very existence I scarcely had a conception before. I have acquired a new and lasting subject of delight. Masters like Van der Weyden, Memling and David I scarcely knew the names of before; now they are distinct individualities to me. I see that the Flemish was a great national school, beginning in history at the Van Eycks and proceeding (in spite of vast foreign influence) uninterruptedly to Rubens.' [1]

As Rabelais had prepared Ellis indirectly for an understanding of Rubens, they were both stepping-stones to Walt Whitman, whom he triumphantly discovered in 1880 and has exalted ever since. He found that Whitman had 'all the masculine breadth and power, the full sympathy, the abounding healthfulness that Heine wanted,' and almost bridged the vast chasm between the ideal world and the real. These impressions he put into an early essay, 'The Two Worlds,' with the qualification that Whitman seemed to lack humor and failed 'to note the discords which are palpable to smaller men.' In May, 1884, Ellis spoke of Whitman in a letter to Olive Schreiner: 'His "Leaves of Grass" reveals, I think, the greatest heart (that has

[1] In the London *Times* of July 22, 1927, there was an article on Rubens, by Charles Marriot, the critic, which Ellis read with hearty sympathy.

found expression) now on earth. . . . Whitman is outside us — beyond and above us, and reveals what we should never have known if he hadn't told us.'

Yet it was not *Leaves of Grass* which absorbed Ellis's attention at this time so much as the author of *Life in Nature*. Returning from Australia with high reverence for Hinton, he wrote a letter of inquiry to Ellice Hopkins, editor of the *Life and Letters of James Hinton*, who sent it on to Mrs. Hinton; the latter replied and soon he was on friendly terms with the whole Hinton family, including the remarkable Caroline Haddon, Mrs. Hinton's sister. They were all charmed with this handsome young admirer of their dead hero and gladly turned over to him quantities of Hinton's unprinted manuscripts. The early books and Miss Hopkins's emasculated biography had left Ellis ignorant of the fact that the last five or six years of Hinton's life, tragically cut short in 1875 by brain fever, were devoted to brilliant pioneer work in the field of sexual morality. He had come to believe that no other subject was so vital to human happiness, at no other point had insincerity and ignorance produced so much cruelty and waste. He predicted that the chief moral battles of the future would centre around marriage. In respectable Christian homes he saw 'the real dark places of the earth,' and in an elastic form of polygamy he saw a great cure for the prevailing evils.

Many of Hinton's later pages read like conscious elaborations on Blake's *Proverbs of Hell*. "A chastity maintained by fear is as unchaste as harlotry . . . a kind of anatomical chastity; a feeling as if some physical relations of things were in themselves pure and others impure, which seems to me the most intense and profound of all possible impurities.' [1] 'The

[1] *The Law-Breaker*, 152.

physical current might be dammed up, but it would be all there, and the chance of its true removal infinitely far off. And what a sight were a world so poised between impure desire and fear. When we had it what could we wish done with it but that, as soon as possible, it should cease, and no longer uselessly defile the face of Nature.' 'This makes me feel afresh that purity must come, not from any thought or effort, or anything we can do about the sexual passion itself, but from banishing it from thought, letting it sink down into a mere instrument, as it is, of human life; not thinking of it at all but only of its uses. That is the true purity and it must come.' 'Is it not a blessing that the false purity does not and cannot exist alone; that with it there is — and must go on to be — mere unrestrained lust and bestiality? If it were otherwise we might be enslaved by it forever and never know that it meant foulness.[1]

'Is it not reasonable to propose purity to make things free? It restores Nature to her course, and, above all, love to its freedom. The love between man and woman has this exquisite magic in it: its freedom means purity, because it wants and needs all things free, and cannot be free without being pure. That love is gifted with this power by virtue of its union with the body. (Virtue in an impure person's mouth means opposing Nature.) There is a muddle here and I propose *purity*, by virtue of its power of making things free, to heal it, to deliver from false bonds, (of course counted sacred.) This power of purity we have not recognized or used.'[2]

Such arguments, however, may not eliminate the time-honored suspicion that sexual experience is simply the lowest form of selfish and degrading pleasure,

[1] *The Law-Breaker*, 153. [2] *Ibid.*, 297.

rightly to be indulged in only for procreative purposes. This is essentially the view of traditional Christianity, Catholic as well as Protestant, in spite of certain tolerant gestures. All pleasure really tends to draw us from devotion to God and make us forget our duty toward our fellows. To this ancient doctrine Hinton had his own peculiarly modern reply: 'Man is condemned to pleasure; but that does not mean to selfishness. It means the very contrary: that he must be free. Let him look at those pleasures which are service and take them.' [1] 'We cannot fight selfishness in that contracted space which is given by putting away pleasure. Attack it and see.... How intensely the feeling is in us that selfishness means doing what is pleasant is well betrayed by the expression so constantly used (even in joke sometimes) about selfishness as shown in those whose life is given to what they most like.' [2] 'Service consists in doing pleasant things.' [3]

'Pleasure is become identical with goodness. How it simplifies life to have no question to ask but what is wanted! One question instead of at least two: at once of what is wanted and of what we may do; demanding such a balancing of contradictions, that it is no wonder it resolves itself into fixed and rigid rules which are embodied mischief and cruelty — alike in the obeying and the breaking.' [4] 'This is the proclamation: Good has nothing to do with putting away pleasure. Come in, therefore, you pleasure-led people, and claim goodness as your reward. If there is any reason in a man for his putting away pleasure in order to be good, let him repent. Let him repent and become a new creature.[5]

[1] *Ibid.*, 249. [2] *Ibid.*, 248. [3] *Ibid.*, 222.
[4] *Ibid.*, 232. [5] *Ibid.*, 235.

'Indulging passion — or obeying impulse — is an art; nay, is it not *the* art? Whenever it exists in an eminent and inborn way it is called genius; that is, the art of indulging passion; of knowing or discovering impulse. License is not indulgence of passion; it is restraint.'[1] 'What I see is simply dynamic relations in human life. But this is seeing it all as poetry; it is poetry. Then is all poetry — that is truly poetry — the same thing essentially, little as it may look like it: the perception, or feeling, rather, of the dynamic relations. (It is this alone that makes diverse things one.) If it were so then it were one with science which is also the perception of dynamic relations. And science too is one with art: so that all the three were one.'[2]

Here was a new and refreshing song indeed. No longer the thin pipings of academic moralists, obsessed with shackling duties and paralyzed in the face of desire. No longer the violent emphasis on 'the mystery of pain' to the complete neglect of 'the mystery of pleasure.' Let others exult in the pale hedonism of British philosophy. Here was a complete and everlasting yea! Fifty years later we sophisticates may complain that Hinton's outbursts lack balance and system. Were not his best insights fatally distorted by a reckless indulgence in paradox and rhapsody? In part this charge is undoubtedly true, but we must go on to ask who else at that time was making any similar contribution. It was not until 1877, two years after Hinton's death, that Ibsen began his famous series of social dramas and they rarely touch the sexual question at its centre. In 1875 Bernard Shaw was nineteen, and Sigmund Freud, eighteen, had not even begun to dream of his epochal method.

[1] *The Law-Breaker*, 255. [2] *Ibid.*, 263.

Yet in those final critical years Hinton's mind was moving in the directions taken by each of this notable group. He perceived the worm at the heart of domesticity, the poisons generated by frustrated desires, the infinite waste resulting from inelastic ideals, and he proposed a radical transvaluation of values.

Young Ellis was quite carried away by many of Hinton's flashing audacities (although never by his central idea of polygamy), and during several years worked devotedly over piles of the disordered manuscripts. His second published article, a brief answer to the question, 'What Is Pureness?' [1] was put forward largely as an exposition of the views of Hinton. It distinguished very simply between purity as a matter of motive and of action, as a mental attitude and a zoölogical condition. As long as purity remained only a matter of technical biology it would possess no moral quality at all. This thought is certainly not ingenious, but a widespread taboo has made its expression very uncommon. 'Let the thought be wholly on human needs, or "service," as it has been called; let the mere desire for indulgence apart from the thought of other be thrown aside; let, in short, the *self* be cast out, and all the conditions are fulfilled. Then it is that all things become ours. It has been said profoundly by one of the original thinkers of our time (Hinton), to whose unpublished writings I am on this subject indebted, that "what we call sins are the confused expressions of Nature's claims for a higher order." It is towards that higher order that we must look.' To the theme of purity Ellis returned again and again in his later writings, as in *The New Spirit*, *Affirmations*, *Sex in Relation to Society* and *Little Essays of Love and Virtue*.

[1] *Modern Thought*, April, 1881.

In December, 1882, he dedicated two sonnets to Hinton.[1]

A PIONEER

I

A world where impulse, art, joy, pain combine:
Impulse as guide to every act well done;
Art as the way; joy, pain drunk glad from one
Great sacramental chalice of all life's wine;
O prophet soul, among those now to shine
Who see the victory lost as victory won,
Near his swift eager soul that had outrun,
Even Shelley's spirit of fame — this sight was thine!

At length we see thy vision and are strong
To yearn with thee, O seer, from out the night,
We lend our work to this, our thought, our song;
Nor will we cease henceforth from mortal fight
Until athwart the cloven shades of wrong
Heaven's field stands fair at last beneath this light.

II

An awful angel met thee by the way:
Divinely mad, alone among the throng,
We found thee wrestling with the world's vast wrong.
No more to be the sophist that men say,
Nerved by that struggle, able to obey
The law of love and freedom; so belong
Insight and hope to thee which make men strong:
Thou shalt prevail at breaking of the day.

And, lo, now that thy strength no more is hurled
On earth's old wrong, thy light's the lovelier shed;
Thy dream doth weave itself across the world
To sweeten by its sight our daily bread;
And all thy passion is a flag unfurled,
O trumpet soul that callest from the dead.

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[1] These sonnets, and another written later, bear on his work as a moralist, and have no reference to Ellis's religious experience in Australia.

In 1883 Ellis wrote a third sonnet, similar in substance and mood, though by no means in artistry, to Keats's *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer.*

JAMES HINTON

When I read how those ancient Tyrian men
(Weary of coasting islands to and fro)
Sailed to the West three thousand years ago,
Sailed boldly by the pole-star, right between
Those strange rock-pillars of the world, and then
Saw the Atlantic's vast wild ebb and flow,
And knew that they were first of men to know
The sea where Baal-Melkarth sinks at even:
I think of that great sea of natural law,
By passions wind-tossed, self-restrained and free,
Led by the moon of truth, which this man saw,
And dreamed that man was steering for that sea,
So wonderful, so glad, so full of awe,
That as God's very Home it seemed to be.

The periodical *Mind* for July, 1884, contained a long essay on 'Hinton's Later Thought,' by H. Havelock Ellis. Admitting Hinton's tendency to run wild in the large liberty of metaphysics, Ellis dwelt on him as a *stimulating* thinker, particularly in the sphere of morals. 'It is Hinton's distinction that he is probably the first man of ethical genius who has been deeply and consciously impressed with the methods of science.' He treated morals dynamically and tried to save virtue from the luxury of the unimaginative few. He arrived at his final conclusions on 'the fluency of right' through the study of painting, 'where all details are subordinated to the whole, where all truth is the truth of relation, where nothing exists by itself; a world where the conservation of energy rules and where the best is the easiest.' Far from some of Ruskin's Sunday-school views, Hinton once remarked: 'Morals cannot stand before a paint-brush. It never has; visibly it

never can.' Hinton's special concern with the problems of sexual relations Ellis also emphasized. 'The selfishness of monogamy and the home, the cruelty of virtue, the rigidity of arbitrary rules and feelings in regard to all such questions seemed to him unparalleled before in Christendom, or out of it. In the Protean evils which are grouped around that part of life Hinton found a *reductio ad absurdum* of the present morality. It was partly because the evil he saw was so intense, although chiefly because of the power here stored up and waiting to be liberated, that he felt that around the question of marriage the chief battle of morals would have to be fought. When that was won, when it was possible to follow traceable needs even there, everything would be won.'

In the midst of his medical training and other activities, Ellis had been working steadily on a volume of selections from Hinton's later writings, which was published at the end of 1884 under the title of *The Law-Breaker* and *The Coming of the Law*. The first part deals with Jesus, the typical man of genius, who is simply 'the point of least resistance through which Nature passes into life'; he breaks the mould of arbitrary laws in order to make an art of conduct. But out of this destruction come the laws of service and pleasure which form the new hygiene of the soul. Expressed at length, it is a brilliant, though broken, argument, which partly justifies Ellis's introductory statement that 'perhaps no modern man has shown a finer strain of ethical genius' than James Hinton.[1]

Almost as soon as Ellis began his lifelong friendship with Olive Schreiner, early in 1884, he introduced her to Hinton's writings, published and unpublished. Evi-

[1] From this book were taken all the passages quoted earlier in this chapter.

dently he expressed his great admiration of them frequently and emphatically, for several times she warned him against being dominated by Hinton. 'Don't think of and dwell upon Hinton *too much*. I think it is not well for any of us to allow another personality to submerge in any way our own.'[1] 'Don't think too much of Hinton. Your nobler, stronger, many-sided self must not be crushed by him, or rather I should say warped, for it will *not* be crushed.'[2] 'Hinton is a great man; the world will be better for what he has to say; you are doing good work in helping the world to hear it. In truth I do not think it was so much dear old Hinton himself as the effect of Hinton's admirers that has not been good for you. I can quite imagine that if I were among people who were always telling me I was a second George Sand I might in the end fancy I was and lose some of my own virtues in trying to imitate hers.'[3]

Such passages prove even more than the words of Ellis himself how deeply he was under the spell of Hinton for a time. His very fate trembled in the balance. He was fascinated by Hinton's dynamic conception of emotional forces, by a whole world of remote and seductive theories. He was in danger of being carried away from his own original and central aim, *the scientific study of the actual facts of sex*. This was a real danger because premature speculation was becoming all too common in the field of sex, whereas patient, dispassionate inquiry was almost unknown, and for such inquiry Ellis was peculiarly fitted. One of his great contributions to contemporary life is the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, in which moral evaluations remained secondary until the sixth volume, but that achievement would not have been possible

[1] May 28. [2] June 30. [3] July 13.

for one dominated by Hinton. How Ellis recovered that natural balance, which he had never entirely lost, is to be explained partly by some further associations.

After the long stay in the bush it was a rare pleasure for him to attend meetings and listen to speakers in Hyde Park. An epidemic of reform was about to begin. Mrs. Hinton and Caroline Haddon were enthusiasts. Young J. C. Foulger, the publisher, printer and editor of *Modern Thought*, in which Ellis's little paper on pureness appeared, was eager to start a new society and Ellis agreed to support him. In September, 1881, the plans were outlined at a preliminary gathering, some months later the constitution was completed and on Sunday evening, November 26, 1882, the first regular meeting of The Progressive Association, 'established for the promotion of intellectual and social well-being,' was held at Islington Hall, London. The first report of the association was drawn up at the end of ten weeks by the secretaries, John C. Foulger and H. Havelock Ellis: a lecture of some sort had been held on every Sunday evening, fifty-three members were enrolled on the books and a few shillings remained in the treasury. On the whole, it was a successful beginning. At such gatherings Ellis never made a speech or asked questions, but sat quietly and appeared very attentive. In fact he has the remarkable record of not having delivered a single lecture or address in his entire life.

The Progressive Association took in one hundred new members during 1883 and conducted branches in the poorer sections of London. Among the main speakers were William Morris, H. M. Hyndman and Rhys Davids. But the annual report of the association stressed especially the improvement of their congregational singing, through the use of their new booklet, *Hymns of Progress*, 'dealing solely with the largest and

simplest aspects of human life, human love, human hope.' Ellis edited the collection and contributed to it a hymn of five stanzas, which has since been embodied in many sacred and secular hymn books, and may, he sometimes suggests playfully, be remembered when all his other works are forgotten.

> 'Onward, brothers, march still onward,
> March still onward hand in hand;
> Till ye see at last Man's Kingdom,
> Till ye reach the Promised Land.'

Soon after committing this inanity Ellis became suspicious of 'the cheap idol of progress,' and almost abandoned the use of the word, except for purposes of warning. Not that he doubted the possibility of definite social amelioration, but he saw that a furious interest in the unachieved future was becoming as insidious as a blind allegiance to the over-idealized past. He liked to say with Walt Whitman that 'there will never be any more perfection than there is now,' and to emphasize the neglected platitude that 'the Kingdom of God is within you.' At the end of the introduction to *The New Spirit*, his first book, Ellis wrote: 'The old cycles are forever renewed and it is no paradox that he who would advance can never cling too close to the past. The thing that has been is the thing that will be again; if we realize that, we may avoid many of the disillusions, miseries, insanities, that forever accompany the throes of new birth.' The year before the outbreak of the Great War, that final proof of the superiority of western civilization, Ellis remarked: 'We realise the world better if we imagine it, not as a Progress to Prim Perfection, but as the sustained upleaping of a Fountain, the pillar of a Glorious Flame.' [1]

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, I, 228; cf. *Impressions and Comments*, II, 149–51; *The Philosophy of Conflict*, chap. VIII.

This is only a detail of metaphor, perhaps, but it has been for Ellis an antidote which has helped to save him from one of the worst of modern poisons. He glories in the dance of life — but not because it must end in Heaven.

During his student days at St. Thomas's Hospital, Ellis often walked across the river to lunch with Percival A. Chubb, a young clerk of the Local Government Board, who took a leading part in The Progressive Association and various other societies. In the summer of 1883 Chubb spent three memorable weeks at Capri with Thomas Davidson, laying plans for the moral regeneration of mankind, and in the autumn he spoke enthusiastically to Ellis of Davidson's approaching visit to London. Ellis naturally looked forward to meeting the great man, but little anticipated what was to be the curiously negative consequence of their friendship.

Davidson, a Scotch-American born in 1840, was a wandering scholar of enormous erudition and dominating, if not domineering, personality. 'A knight-errant of the intellectual life,' according to William James, he felt that he had a firm grasp on the truth and went about frankly looking for groups of disciples. Although his intense philosophical enthusiasms changed from time to time, he always insisted that right conduct must be founded on eternal metaphysical verities. He wrote various books and articles, but his wide influence came through his numerous personal contacts. Among his warm friends and admirers were William James, Felix Adler, William Knight and Morris R. Cohen.[1]

Soon after Davidson came to London at the end of September, 1883, he began to confer frequently with

[1] Cf. William James: *Memories and Studies*, chap. v; *Memorials of Thomas Davidson*, collected and edited by William Knight.

Ellis and a few other potential disciples in Chubb's rooms. To Ellis he wrote on the 3d of October: 'I do not know how you were affected by the discussion of last evening. As for me, it at once confirmed me in my belief in the need of a community, and showed clearly some of the most formidable difficulties in the way of such a thing; the want of a spiritual life, the childish prejudice against "metaphysics," the absence of wholeheartedness, the fear of ridicule. Kant and Comte have done their work, taken the sun out of life, and left men groping in darkness. . . . You miss a positive basis in our little program. The fact is there can never be anything but a metaphysical one, for the simple reason that all abiding reality is metaphysical; that is to say, lies behind the physical or sensuously phenomenal.'

'Would you be vexed,' Davidson continued, 'if I recommended you to study Rosmini's works? Leaving out the dogmatic part of them, I think they are the gospel of the future. With your freedom from prejudice, your desire to do the best you know, and your human sympathy, you would, I am certain, find great satisfaction in them, and be able to free yourself from the last remnant of that terrible monism from which hardly any English thinker escapes. In return, I shall read Hinton with the utmost care. . . . I am anxious to see you, and to bind again the broken threads of our progress.' [1]

Ellis was not deeply attracted to Davidson, but he was interested in his idea of a spiritual community to be known as The Fellowship of the New Life. After many preliminary gatherings only attended by Davidson, Chubb, Ellis and one or two others, the first formal meeting of the Fellowship was held on the 24th of

[1] *Memorials of Thomas Davidson*, 37–39.

October, 1883, at the quarters of Edward R. Pease. There were present sixteen earnest souls unanimously agreed on 'realising amongst themselves the higher life and making it a primary care to provide a worthy education for the young.' At a fourth meeting several weeks later, after Davidson's departure from England, Ellis, Chubb and seven others of the rapidly growing society came forward with the following exalted programme:

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE NEW LIFE

Object. — The cultivation of a perfect character in each and all.

Principle. — The subordination of material things to spiritual.

Fellowship. — The sole and essential condition of fellowship shall be a single-minded, sincere and strenuous devotion to the object and principle.

'Certain members of that circle, modestly feeling that the revolution would have to wait an unreasonably long time if postponed until they personally attained perfection,' [1] soon determined to form a new society on more practical, economic grounds. Consequently, at the first meeting of the Fellowship in 1884, Frank Podmore presented the plans for 'the Fabian Society,' to work for the 'reconstruction of society on a non-competitive basis with the object of remedying the evils of poverty.' Ten of the fourteen people present favored Podmore's proposal and the Fabians entered upon their exciting history. A few months later they elected to membership an impecunious young novelist and music critic by the name of George Bernard Shaw.

Ellis, who happened to be absent on the evening of

[1] G. B. Shaw: *Fabian Tract*, no. 41.

the division, remained with the Fellowship and was not at all tempted to join the new group also, as did Chubb and several others. 'The Fabian Society is, I think, a little unsatisfactory,' Ellis wrote to Olive Schreiner in April, 'as it is not quite carrying out the intentions with which it was started. I have a great deal of sympathy with the people who chiefly care about the New Life. Some of them are among the most earnest and enthusiastic people I know. They wish, as soon as possible, to create a kind of atmosphere in which it shall be possible for the outward life to be a true exponent of the inward life. They are only about ten or twelve in number at present. I should like much to introduce you to the meetings.' This attitude illustrates an essential contrast between Shaw and Ellis. Shaw's meagre years in Dublin and London drove him inevitably to socialism and economics. Ellis has been comparatively indifferent to economic questions and his Australian solitude strengthened a temperament that was much more that of an anarchist than a socialist. As Shaw's conversion resulted from a lecture by Henry George on the problem of poverty, he naturally considers religion 'that which binds men to one another and irreligion that which sunders,'[1] whereas Ellis's conversion was occasioned by a mystical book read in precious isolation, and frequently he has defined religion as the emotional adjustment of the individual to a vast, impersonal universe. They both educated themselves and achieved self-assurance at an early date, but Ellis's reticence made conspicuous gestures impossible, as his conversation was quiet, equable, solid, not brilliant, aphoristic nor Shavian. For such reasons Ellis's mode of living has been quite unlike Shaw's and general recognition has come to him

[1] *In the Days of My Youth.*

more slowly. Although meeting infrequently they have been on friendly terms for more than forty years. To-day Ellis is sometimes amused to be taken for Shaw in public. It is true that their beards are now of the same color, but the open look in Ellis's eyes, gray-blue with a luminous ring of hazel around the pupil, is very different from Shaw's concentrated satanic gleam, and in the matter of noses as well as other details there is also room for choice.

For several years in the eighties Ellis made the long trip across London on Sunday evenings to The Progressive Association, and even more faithfully to the bi-monthly meetings and country excursions of the Fellowship. He had helped to start the two groups and consequently felt obliged to support them long after he had lost his enthusiasm. They were of no real significance in his life, except to make him sceptical of the value of such organizations. Personally he was not well suited to them and preferred the company of one congenial person at a time. It is noteworthy that even to-day Ellis rarely meets two or three persons together.

During the early months of the Fellowship, Davidson tried desperately to lead Ellis into the path of philosophic truth. Ellis had become rather seriously interested in metaphysical questions about 1880, chiefly through Hinton, and plunged into a course of reading that was largely new to him. He studied Schwegler's *History of Philosophy*, Kuno Fischer's *History of Modern Philosophy*, R. Willis's pioneer work on Spinoza, Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity* and Ribot's *Schopenhauer et sa Philosophie*. He bought a complete edition of Spinoza in Latin, which he worked through diligently, although Latin was by no means easy for him, and several volumes of selections from Schopenhauer, which he has always placed among his

'sacred books.' In Lange's fascinating *History of Materialism* he was deeply impressed by the argument that metaphysics was a form of poetry and not something to be ridiculed. He was also reading many other works of philosophy and following the current discussions in the periodical, *Mind*.

There is no telling how much further Ellis might have gone in this direction, if Davidson had not unintentionally caused him to lose all faith in formal systems of philosophy. Before meeting Davidson, he assumed that 'philosophical beliefs could be imparted and shared; that men could, as it were, live under the same metaphysical dome,' and he was studying with that general assumption in mind. But he reacted against Davidson's dogmatic methods and certain knowledge of metaphysical essences, while Davidson grew increasingly exasperated with the young man who at first had seemed so promising. Finally, with a curt letter, Davidson severed completely the bonds which he had been so eager to make close. 'Davidson enabled me,' wrote Ellis twenty years later, 'to see that a man's metaphysics, if genuinely his, is really a most intimate part of his own personal temperament; and that no one can really identify himself with another's philosophy, however greatly he may admire it, or sympathize with it. This was a valuable lesson to learn, though it was not the lesson that Davidson desired to teach.' [1] Since that early period, between twenty and twenty-four, Ellis has been little concerned with technical philosophy. It is a subject which need not be *studied*, as 'every man is his own philosopher.' From this point of view metaphysics may be considered a rare form of poetry, or, at worst, an innocent perversion.

[1] *Memorials of Thomas Davidson*, 46.

This happened to Ellis when he was at the height of his enthusiasm for Hinton. He was working hard on the manuscripts and enjoyed flaunting some of their ideas before a complacent and conventional world. But now his general philosophic disillusion, resulting from the experience with Davidson, helped him to become more critical of Hinton's speculations and to see that they were largely incompatible with his own scientific interest in the problems of sex. He soon reached the conclusion that Hinton had no originality and was only important as a stimulating force. Ellis thereupon abandoned the immense task of editing all of Hinton's moral speculations, as he believed that they were sufficiently expressed in *The Law-Breaker*. He could no longer work under Hinton's shadow. Thus the young disciple frees himself, must free himself, from the master who has given him so much. It is always a hygienic process, however ungrateful it may seem at the time. Years pass and he often comes back to his early judgment, in more sober form.

For twenty-five years Ellis made no reference to Hinton's name, and no conscious use of his ideas in the first five volumes of the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. This careful avoidance indicated not only a sharp reaction against Hinton, but a fear of being influenced by him. But in the sixth volume, *Sex in Relation to Society*, he cited Hinton many times and made the following comment: 'So far as I am aware, it was James Hinton who chiefly sought to make clear the possibility of a positive morality on the basis of nakedness, beauty, and sexual influence, regarded as dynamic forces which, when suppressed, make for corruption and when wisely used serve to inspire and ennoble life.'

When Ellis's wife proposed of her own accord, about 1910, to take up the task he had dropped so long be-

fore, he was much pleased, and in 1916 wrote a preface for her volume on Hinton, which was published two years after her death. Admitting the extravagance of Hinton's personality, Ellis stresses his prophetic insight and 'the stimulating originality and courage' with which he faced problems:

'The fruitfulness of Pasteur's work in biology was largely due to the fact that he turned to it with a new vision trained in a widely different field of chemistry. Hinton had not the genius of Pasteur, but the stimulating freshness of his moral speculations is largely due to the fact that he turned to morals with a vision trained in a widely different field of biology. He brought his worship of Nature, that is to say, his belief in the progressively and flexibly vital, and dynamic, into a field where, as men had usually been taught, it is the chief business of life to fight against Nature. . . . The woman question is now entering a new and larger phase which brings it near to precisely those fundamental problems with which Hinton was mainly concerned. Here it is that Hinton's significance for us is seen. Half a century ago he was struggling with these very problems, among people for whom they had no meaning at all. To-day they have become intelligible. . . . As we watch Hinton in this struggle, we seem sometimes to be conscious of a prophet who is caught up from the earth in a whirlwind he cannot control, and borne away in a chariot we cannot follow.'

In temperament and method few men could be more unlike than Hinton and Ellis. The one feverish, irregular, hasty with sweeping inferences; the other patient, restrained, orderly. The one attacking the sex question with brilliant violence in the last phase of his life; the other spending fifty years to cover it minutely, in order to avoid premature speculation.

Ellis chose his theme five years before falling under the spell of Hinton's boldness and afterwards, recovering his balance completely, he went on with his long investigation. Yet his devotion to those piles of chaotic manuscripts in his early twenties meant inevitably that he would always be touched with Hinton's flame. Whatever the differences in method and temperament, they had the same tremendous objective in common — the clarification of sexual issues for the alleviation of sexual misery. And they shared the same principles, the same dream — the dynamic, fluent nature of goodness, the idea of purity as a form of joy, the dance of life achieving ineffable beauty through the art of love.

CHAPTER VII

PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON

St. Thomas's, the second oldest hospital in London, is that noble series of buildings on the Surrey bank of the Thames, facing the Houses of Parliament and the wealth of the west. In the rear it overlooks the poverty-stricken streets of Lambeth, one of the most wretched, crowded districts in the world. The present structure was begun in 1868, with the laying of the corner-stone by Queen Victoria and declared open by her in 1871. The medical school in connection with the hospital has long been of the first rank in England.

According to the official record of St. Thomas's, H. H. Ellis entered as 'perpetual student' in October, 1880, went through the regular course during the next six years and in 1889 qualified as Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries of London. That is, he passed the comprehensive examination of one of England's oldest medical associations and received a registrable diploma in medicine, surgery and midwifery, with the right to practice anywhere in Great Britain or Ireland. Ellis thus became a 'doctor' in every practical sense of the word, although in England the phrase, 'doctor of medicine,' applies strictly only to holders of a university degree.

Ellis had returned home in the spring of 1879, it will be recalled, hoping to begin his medical studies at once, but as sufficient funds were not available he taught school for a year near Birmingham. Then, with the help of his family and a generous loan from Caroline Haddon, he was able to register at St. Thomas's. After two years in the school proper, concentrating on

anatomy, physiology and chemistry, he began his clinical studies, which were detailed in the register as follows: out-patient clerk, July–Oct., 1882, to Dr. J. F. Payne (afterward senior physician and skin specialist); out-patient dresser, July–Oct., 1883, to Mr. Bernard Pitts; in-patient clerk, Oct. 1883–March, 1884, to Dr. John H. Bristowe (senior physician and author); in-patient dresser, April–June, 1884, to Mr. Francis Mason (authority on cleft palate); ophthalmic ward, under Mr. Edward Nettleship; midwifery, under Dr. H. Gervis and Dr. Robert Cory (specialists in diseases of women).

They were long, exhausting days of reading, dissecting, dispensing, dressing, which can only be appreciated by the overworked intern who has walked the wards and learned to live in clinics. For the layman that remote world of the hospital is captured in the Rembrandtesque pages of the novel, *Of Human Bondage*, by Somerset Maugham, who studied at St. Thomas's thirty years ago: 'On the whole the impression was neither of tragedy nor of comedy. There was no describing it. It was manifold and various; there were tears and laughter, happiness and woe; it was tedious and interesting and indifferent; it was as you saw it: it was tumultuous and passionate; it was grave; it was sad and comic; it was trivial; it was simple and complex; joy was there and despair; the love of mothers for their children, and of men for women; lust trailed itself through the rooms with leaden feet, punishing the guilty and innocent, helpless wives and wretched children; drink seized men and women and cost its inevitable price; death sighed in these rooms; and the beginning of life, filling some poor girl with terror and shame, was diagnosed there. There was neither good nor bad there. There were just facts.'

For his six months as in-patient clerk under Dr. Bristowe, Ellis was graded 'very good' in the permanent record. During that strenuous period his work was made lighter by a patient placed under his special care, the subject of the sonnet 'Arabella.'

A simple girl who wrought from early morn
Her simple work, with gentle, sweet-eyed face,
Sweet-lipped, sweet-voiced, and quiet unshy grace,
Her three and twenty years so child-like borne,
Fell sick. Through dreary autumn weeks forlorn
She bore the ills that seemed to crowd apace,
Till, like a trampled daisy, one might trace
The poised head lift, the instinctive grace new-born.

Bella, what devious paths you trod, and how
You came whence few have come by Death unmet,
We cannot know. I am glad you might not die.
When you were ill I cared for you; and now
I think we may not kiss each other — yet
I would my love went with you. So — good-bye.

Arabella Daniels worked at a jam factory in South London, during the summer from five in the morning until six or eight in the evening, labelling jam pots at ninepence a gross; by very hard work she could do two gross a day. She was brought to the hospital with tubercular peritonitis and was not expected to recover, but, almost miraculously, she did. She was a girl of rare charm, delicacy and refinement such as one would not expect to come out of London slums. Ellis saw her only when on duty and made no attempt to meet her after she left the hospital. She came back once to show herself fully restored to health. Years later he found that the name of 'Daniels' is common in Suffolk, his ancestral county, and wondered if she was another example of the attraction he often felt for the women of East Anglia. Whatever the reason, her loveliness still glows in his memory.

In the midst of his arduous medical training Ellis never forgot that he had undertaken it entirely as a means to further ends. 'What you say,' he wrote to Olive Schreiner in May, 1884, 'about a doctor's life rightly understood is, I think, true; it satisfies one's two great desires — to know and to serve. I do not feel great enthusiasm for it myself but it is not because I do not realise its goodness. Till I was 19 I never had the faintest desire to be anything (though I was teaching then — meanwhile). Then it suddenly flashed upon me in a simple instant (which I shall never forget) that I must be a doctor. I've never had a doubt about it since. But the work for me lies in the things I have to say some day. I cannot help making even doctoring subservient to that.'

The one subject of his course in which Ellis distinguished himself was midwifery. He was given particularly good instruction by Dr. H. Gervis and Dr. Robert Cory. While living at the hospital during two-week periods in the summers of 1881–2–3–4, he made over a hundred deliveries among the poor people of Lambeth, Vauxhall and adjoining districts. Awakened in his upper room at any hour of the night by a jingling bell, he would often be led away to some vermin-infested hole where water and light were scarce. His first case was a drunken woman stretched out on the floor among her howling children. One day a relative of a prospective mother came to the hospital and requested Ellis's services in the following complimentary fashion: 'Don't send any of those young students. Send us that elderly gentleman, with the beard. He is so very kind.' The elderly gentleman was getting on toward twenty-five.

In a letter of May 10, 1884, to Olive Schreiner, Ellis said that he liked most in his medical training the ob-

stetrical work in the summers. 'If I don't learn much that is fresh in obstetrics I learn how the people live and think, which is very interesting, and also I enjoy the supreme luxury of living and caring for them — knowing that I may because it is good for them. It is quite a new and delicious experience to them sometimes, and they *are* so grateful for what are really only little silly nothings (and yet mean a great deal). It is really nothing more than nursing; the nurses, when there are any, are often worse than useless (I only know one good nurse who goes to midwifery cases among the poor), but it is very sweet to me, and I look forward to it. — This summer will be the last time.'

These experiences brought home to Ellis in a concrete way the problems of birth and population. He now understood more fully why Dr. Drysdale considered them 'the elements of social science.' If all people could visit lying-in hospitals or even attend a pre-natal clinic occasionally, there would be somewhat less faith in spontaneous spawning. Statistics may be eloquent, but they rarely speak aloud. The fervor with which Ellis to-day defends birth control goes back to those dirty unlit rooms in the slums of London.

As medicine was to be the foundation of his life-work in sex, he began at once to take advantage of the opportunities that the hospital offered. A volume of 'Scientific Notes; Original and Selected,' numbered I and dated 1881–, contained a great mass of material, but it was broken up for use in later writing and now only a few significant fragments remain. The incomplete index reads:

Modesty
Nipples, Sore
Obsession

Parturition. Easy
Prostitution
Religious mania
Sex and insanity
Sex and pigmentation
Sex. Acton on
Sex. (?) discovery of
Sexual intercourse
Sexual disorders in women and insanity
Sexual differentia
Suicide in France
Smell. The sense of
Spinal irritation
Sterility. Sims on

Under 'Parturition. Easy' is the following comment: 'Mrs. Turner, aged 31; 3rd child. Confinement remarkably easy and painless; talked merrily between pains and felt and seemed quite well the next morning. She had a bright pleasant animal face of the Madame Samary type — but not so marked; jaws rather prominent; teeth very visible and overdeveloped. In another case of fairly painless labour the conformation of jaw was highly similar. These were my two easiest cases from the hospital out of about 70.'

In 1899 Ellis published an essay on 'The Evolution of Modesty' which at once became the standard account of that highly complex and misunderstood emotional condition. He began to study it in a concrete way during those early years at St. Thomas's, as a long passage in the notebook makes evident: 'C, who is himself modest, noticed while on obstetrical duty at the Hospital that women would be careful about modesty in exposing person, *if he was*, and not, if he was not. He was a little troubled about this as apparently detracting from his ideas of feminine modesty. I have noticed too (also in obstetrical duty) that young women who are previously very shy, will, as soon as they see that I

think nothing of it, be quite free from modesty (I don't mean immodest) as regards urination, e.g. This is less marked, however, in young girls, in whom the feeling of reserve seems always strongest.

'Hinton thinks that women's "body-modesty" is externally imposed by men. I don't think there's much in this, and it would not be the less real in the course of generations for that.

'"A physical conscience?" I think not.

'Practically a very great deal — perhaps everything — seems to depend on the mental attitude of the other person. It would be intensely horrible to me to be found naked by a woman who was not used to seeing men naked (really a feeling of *amour propre?*). I remember at Carcoar once being conscious that two servant girls were looking in at the window while I was having a bath, and my feeling. But once feel that the woman sees nothing strange and then there is nothing to be modest about. I think that this accounts for the behaviour of the women to C and me, and also that it was perfectly right or natural. No one can possibly feel that C has any nasty thought in his head. . . .'

'One part of modesty is the dread of doing what would be thought improper. Another part (very marked among poor people) is the dread of doing what might possibly be disgusting or unpleasant to others.

'The fact — if it is a fact — that modesty reacts chiefly on what one feels to be the other person's feeling — is a matter of some importance. It means that it is possible, without any emotional violation and even without much preliminary education, to dispense with clothing, given one condition.' This final passage anticipates Ellis's much later remarks on 'the moral value of nakedness' and the means of its cultivation.

In the same book there are a number of loose pieces

of paper with notes on such subjects as expression in criminals, asymmetry of body, Lombroso on the lips, expression of hands, the psychology of taste, and taste experiments. Year after year the data were to pile up, in Darwinian fashion, until at last he was ready to go to print.

Ellis's chief companion at St. Thomas's was a student fourteen years older, J. Barker Smith by name. Previous to entering the medical school he had been for some years a practicing chemist. Unlike Ellis he was highly skilful with his hands and had a passion for laboratory work. His avocations were field botany, sexology, and later clairvoyance. A simple, modest, sincere man, without the slightest pretensions, early economic handicaps prevented him from ever reaching a recognized position commensurate with his ability. At eighty-three he is amazingly vigorous, agile in mind and body, incorrigibly curious and constantly on the move. He still tells a story piquantly and recites Goethe lyrics with fervor. When in London now Ellis usually pays Dr. Smith a visit on Sunday morning. They were drawn together originally by a mutual blindness to the merits of cricket and to an interest in countless things beyond the precinct of the hospital. After a frugal lunch of wine and cheese at an Italian restaurant near the National Gallery, they would go to an important debate in the House of Commons, or to the Geological Museum, or to the British Museum, or to a museum of architecture which they liked especially because the models could be handled. And it may be added that on precisely one occasion they went to a meeting at the hospital of the Y.M.C.A. where the members were engaged in discussing the evils of saying 'damn.' At this time also began their brief trips into East Anglia, where they both had ancestral

associations. A quiet homely friendship throughout, it was especially valuable for Ellis in those earlier years to be associated with a much older man, learned along different lines. Smith's botanical erudition was contagious; he read widely in scientific journals and was always quite ready to go into some remote question of chemistry, where Ellis was less trained.[1]

While attending St. Thomas's, Ellis lived in the suburb of Anerley and took the train into London Bridge nearly every morning. In the evening he hurried home to the dinner which his mother kept warm for him, as the rest of the family dined in the middle of the day. Then he would work hard in his own room until late at night. The strain soon began to tell. The mental excitement before going to bed made sleep impossible. Insomnia threatened. 'I was very sorry,' wrote MacKay to Ellis early in 1883, 'to hear that you have begun to follow my bad example in the matter of curious "mental symptoms," "muscular tremors," etc., but I hope that you will attend to them *in time* or they may ruin your mental power as they have temporarily mine.' Ellis consulted Dr. Payne of the hospital, who prescribed a tonic and a sleeping draught of chloral and bromide. The latter he took for perhaps a week or two, and then decided that the right method of treatment was to avoid mental excitement in the evening. Ad-

[1] Since these lines went to press I received sad news from Havelock Ellis, in a letter dated February 6, 1928: 'You will be sorry to hear that Barker Smith has suddenly broken down in health. In November he accompanied me to Sudbury, where I went for a few days to see the Gainsborough Exhibition and was alert and active as ever, and he has continued to investigate and publish results to the last. But, soon after, he began to fail and is now confined to bed, and growing weaker, though cheerful and peaceful. I shall miss him as I constantly went to him for advice on medical and scientific matters. He had an original and searching mind. It is curious that I had known him for some years before I discovered that Sudbury, which I regard as my chief ancestral home, and Castle Hedingham, which is his, where he was born, are within a walk.'

hering to that decision ever since, he has not taken, or really needed, a drug for sleeplessness. For more than forty years he has been accustomed to put aside all serious thought and heavy reading after the evening meal, and to retire before eleven. In consequence he has been a sound sleeper, ready to get up each morning between six and seven.[1]

It was not a great hardship for Ellis to maintain that decision, as moderation came easily to him, an inheritance as well as a conviction. In abandoning the witching hours of night he had no sense of conquering himself or of making a painful concession to his own weakness. There was simply the fact that one who was neither frail nor unusually robust, needed to conserve his energies if he was to carry out his ambitious plans. And so his career has not been marked by glamorous, extravagant gestures. He has not cultivated the Dionysian furies nor preached sermons on that popular romantic motto: 'The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.' Generally speaking, it is true that a man's ideals reflect his needs rather than his possessions, but that tortuous antithesis is not well illustrated by Havelock Ellis.

Ten years ago he epitomized himself in a neat passage that appears in the second volume of *Impressions and Comments*:

'People may be divided into two classes; the people who like to drink the dregs of their cup, and the people whose instinctive preference it is to leave the dregs. This is a distinction which cuts deep into the moral

[1] Ellis has been subject to no migraine, and only occasionally to ordinary headaches, especially after much reading — an important detail in the life of a student. His eyesight was extremely good (and not astigmatic) until about the age of forty, when glasses came necessary for reading. He now uses glasses of D.3.75. And the fact that he has done practically none of his writing at night may help to explain the character of his imagery.

life. The people of the first class are usually counted the more interesting, and necessarily they are able to extract more out of life, more pain, and possibly more pleasure, though one may question the quality of the extract.

'Personally I am more in sympathy with those who belong to the other class. I have no wish to be in at the death of anything, and though it is true I have followed the Blatant Beast to his captivity, I would usually prefer to leave a beautiful book unfinished; I have never finished Dante's *Divina Commedia*, nor yet that human comedy, Casanova's *Mémoires*. Even when the restaurant band was playing, just now, a piece I like, I came out, by choice, before the end, even near the beginning, and find my pleasure thereby heightened. It is only so that we gain the possession of unending things. A man of this type, we may be sure, invented that legend of the monk who was called away to matins or evensong at the moment when a vision of the Virgin was vouchsafed to him. And, lo! the vision was still there when he returned to his cell.' [1]

As for actual drinking, Ellis's activity has been mild and discriminating. On rambles through the country he used to find good old English ale, with bread and cheese, sufficient for the midday meal. He has a liking for numerous wines, but hock has probably been his favorite, as both pleasant and wholesome — 'one taste at all events,' he remarks, 'that I share with Goethe!' He is little given to spirits and has never been intoxicated. 'It is easy for me to be temperate, for if I begin to go beyond moderation I merely feel dull and heavy.'

Ellis began to smoke cigarettes occasionally at the hospital, and for years was accustomed to having one

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 10–11.

after lunch and dinner, seldom more. At sixty-two he gave them up entirely, as they seemed to have a depressing effect on his heart. In card-playing or any form of gambling he has never had the faintest interest. 'All my instincts are in favor of *Justice*, and from the standpoint of Justice, *Chance* is the very Devil Himself, and as such an inevitable part of life which we need not seek to increase.' Similarly, he has been indifferent to athletics and sports of all kinds; this is a very un-English trait which has made him blind, in spite of his general catholicity, to one of the most characteristic and æsthetic aspects of human life. 'I am active,' says Ellis, 'but like my activities to have in view an end that transcends themselves.' These are all indications of an austere, stoic strain in his nature, very different from the debauched viciousness which Comstocks attribute to those who are concerned with the horrible subject of sex. In terms of Aristotle, who taught that virtue is a beautiful mean between the extremes of excess and deficiency, Ellis has tended toward the vices of 'too little' rather than 'too much.' He has been closer to St. Francis than to Casanova.

In 1886 he finished his work at St. Thomas's in the midst of increasing literary activity and social investigation. That winter he spent as unqualified assistant to a physician at Dalton, a small town in the mining district of northern Lancashire. Strenuous duties were broken by excursions into the beautiful lake country near by and more frequent visits to the fascinating ruins of Furness Abbey. In the winter of 1887–88 he was unqualified assistant at Blackburn, in southern Lancashire, where he saw the awful conditions in which the mill workers lived and the world of roaring machinery which was Strauss's image of the universe as well as the incarnation of industrial

progress. His windows looked on a road leading to the cemetery. 'All day long, it seemed to me, the hearses were trundling along their dead to the grave, or galloping gaily back. When I walked out I met men carrying coffins, and if I glanced at them, perhaps I caught the name of the child I saw two days ago in his mother's lap; or I was greeted by the burly widower of yesterday, pipe in mouth, sauntering along to arrange the burial of the wife who lay, I knew, upstairs at home, thin and haggard and dead. The road became fantastic and horrible at last; even such a straight road to the cemetery, it seemed, was the whole of life, a road full of the noise of the preparation of death. How daintily soever we danced along, each person, laughing so merrily or in such downright earnest, was merely a corpse, screwed down in an invisible coffin, trundled along as rapidly as might be to the grave-edge.' [1]

Yet, on the whole, Ellis spent a very pleasant winter at Blackburn, living with a doctor and his two sisters, and having many conversations with A. B. Grosart, the distinguished scholar and editor. Soon after returning home in March, 1888, he had his first severe illness, a virulent case of scarlet fever, evidently contracted from a patient in Blackburn. Owing to weeks lost in recuperation, he gave up the idea of taking his medical final that year, but early in 1889, after a busy period of reviewing, passed the examination of the Society of Apothecaries, and was prepared to practice in his own right.

He made his début as *locum tenens* for the resident physician of a hydropathic sanatorium at Harrogate in Yorkshire. As there were no duties worth mentioning, he had ample time to explore interesting spots in the county and to put the finishing touches on his

[1] *The New Spirit*, 194.

first book, *The New Spirit*. During 1890 he was entirely occupied with literary work, but in the summer of the following year went to Probus, Cornwall, for two or three weeks, as *locum tenens* in the absence of Dr. Bonar. There Olive Schreiner wrote to him: 'I'm glad you're having such a good time down at that place in Cornwall. I hope that you are a great deal of mental and moral comfort to those folks whom you attend, for it's sore little good you'll do their bodies.' [1] Evidently he gave them some satisfaction, for Dr. Bonar invited him back several times during the next fifteen months.

That marked the end of Ellis's medical career. It took too much time from his principal work. He had practiced long enough to gain the background that he needed and learn the secrets of the profession, not long enough to become calloused to suffering or lose the precious sense of novelty where individuals are concerned. Since then he has been a physician of souls, while keeping up with the developments in medicine to a remarkable degree. This combination of interests in Ellis was not merely fortuitous or fortunate; it seems to have been essential in the past century to the students who pierced most deeply into the secrets of the human mind. Among literary names, Proust was the son of a physician, Flaubert and Dostoievsky were reared in hospitals, Chekhov and Schnitzler practiced medicine, and even Ibsen spent a few disagreeable years in an apothecary's shop. Of the three pioneer psychologists whose work lies behind the most fruitful investigations of to-day, Francis Galton was walking the hospital at sixteen, William James had a thorough medical training and Sigmund Freud took his doctorate without intending to practice.

In a word, Ellis the physician cannot be separated

[1] *The Letters of Olive Schreiner*, 196.

from Ellis the psychologist and critic. The years at St. Thomas's were an integral part of his career and he is a licensed member of the British medical profession. It would have been appropriate for that profession to give him some official recognition as the world's authority on a not unimportant phase of human health, and the Royal Society might have made him a Fellow without lowering its standards, but physicians and scientists generally are notoriously reticent about that very act which brought them into existence — and Ellis has not suffered seriously from their neglect.

CHAPTER VIII

OLIVE SCHREINER

WHILE young Ellis was teaching and meditating in the Australian bush, a governess, four years his senior, living on lonely farms, far up the Great Karroo of South Africa, was pouring her life into an immortal novel. She was the daughter of a noble but impractical German, Gottlob Schreiner, and a talented English woman, Rebecca Lyndall, who were sent in 1837 to South Africa by the London Missionary Society. The sixth of twelve children, several of whom died in infancy, she was born in a mud-floored room of Wittebergen Mission Station, christened Olive Emilie, and reared on the verge of poverty, while her father preached the gospel to Hottentots and other heathen. Except for a few random lessons, Olive Schreiner was her own teacher even in childhood, read whatever was available, chiefly the Bible, and by twelve or thirteen became a 'free thinker,' to the particular horror of a devout brother and a devouter sister, who persecuted her religiously. She recovered at sixteen from religious despair, after reading Spencer's *First Principles*, borrowed from a passing stranger. But in that same year occurred the first attacks of the asthma which ravaged her strong body, progressively undermined her powers of concentration and helped to make her a restless, neurotic wanderer.

In early childhood she began to keep a 'journal' and compose stories which were her only deliverance from a raw, cramping environment. At twenty she was working on two or three full-sized novels and at twenty-four completed *The Story of an African Farm*, a work

of elemental genius comparable to Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. It was sent to publishers in England and returned with suggestions for small omissions, which she carried out. Then, in 1881, with money saved from several years' work as governess, she sailed for England, determined to become a doctor. But she was not at all fitted, by temperament or education, for systematic study, and only trained as a nurse for eight or ten days. Her asthma grew much worse in the English climate. She tried vainly to go on with her writing, fell into long fits of depression and changed her address every few weeks. 'Where am I blowing to?' she wrote in her journal of October, 1881. 'Where am I going to? I sometimes fear I shall never be well again.' [1]

In the midst of such growing anxiety she was relieved to have the publishers, Chapman and Hall, accept *The Story of an African Farm*. It appeared in January, 1883, under the name of 'Ralph Iron,' and at once caused a wide stir as a brilliant, original narrative, morally advanced and boldly agnostic. All the more was the attention of the *literati* and public aroused when it was discovered that 'Ralph Iron' was a strikingly beautiful young woman, refreshingly direct in manner and speech. In July a second edition of the book was published.

The following December there was in *The Fortnightly Review* an article on the 'Theories and Practices of Modern Fiction,' by Henry Norman, in which *The Story of an African Farm* was considered one of the outstanding novels of the year. 'It is the story of the growth of a human mind, cut off from all but the most commonplace influences, facing its own doubts,' working out its own salvation. 'The book might be called

[1] S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner: *The Life of Olive Schreiner*, 151.

the romance of the New Ethics.' Interested by these comments, Ellis at once got it from a loan library and was profoundly impressed. He had been a Waldo himself, he understood 'Waldo's Stranger,' and he thrilled before those flashing pictures of the rolling veldt. Not realizing that the novel had been so favorably received and had sold so well, he wrote to the author to express his intense appreciation. Among numerous commendatory letters Ellis's at once struck a sympathetic chord, and her friendly response caused him to write again. As she was then staying at St. Leonards and remained there for three months longer, they exchanged many letters before finally meeting in May. This was an excellent beginning for two such shy, hypersensitive people who wrote more easily than they talked. It made them eager to see one another and at the same time prevented some of those superficial embarrassments which retard a mutual understanding. In a sense they were both exiles from the solitude that had made them. 'Is it very long,' she asked, 'since you left Australia? Do not you miss the starlight nights when one can be out all night? I miss them so. It is so hard to think shut up in a room.' And some days later: 'I liked the last sheet about your Australian life. Yes, our African sky gives one the same sense of perfect freedom and wild exhilaration; sometimes one feels as though, for no reason that could be given, one were almost in an ecstasy of happiness when one goes out alone. Here one never is alone.' [1]

She told him how she happened to write *The Story of an African Farm*, complimented him on his recent essay on Thomas Hardy and asked if he knew 'a little play called Nora by Ibsen.' Of Hinton, to whom Ellis promptly directed her, she wrote: 'I have not the same

[1] *The Letters of Olive Schreiner*, 13–14.

personal feeling for Hinton that you have, who know so much more of him than I can from that *Life;* but one thing that draws me to him very much is his *fear of feeling;* that comes out so clearly in the extract you sent me. Some people *dare* not feel fully — all life must be a long self-repression.' [1]

In the course of a letter some days later Olive Schreiner said to Ellis: 'I want to tell you what my feeling is about woman, but I can't to-night because I would have too much to say. I have just got a letter I should like to show you. It is from a woman whose heart is being broken; and the man who is doing it doesn't know and doesn't *realise* what he is doing. Why can't we men and women come near each other, and help each other, and not kill each other's souls and blight each other's lives? There is no need why it should be so.' [2] To this Ellis replied: 'Those mistakes and misunderstandings between men and women are so terribly sad and so frequent. Men, often, so totally misunderstand women (far more, I think, than women misunderstand men, though women often feel their own ignorance in an exaggerated way) and make their misunderstanding into ideals and cling to them. But surely it will not be so always. And we can help a little to make it different. — I think we have much to say about all this bye and bye.'

This letter was not received by Miss Schreiner, but was returned to Ellis days later with 'Gone No Address' marked on the envelope, and hence it has been available for quotation in these pages. The difficulty is explained by her note of May 12th: 'I have not got your letter. I found the house at 5, Harrington Road, in a terrible condition and all the people drunk. The woman seized hold of me and would not let me have

[1] *The Letters of Olive Schreiner*, 16. [2] *Ibid.*, 18–19.

my luggage until I had paid her 30s. though I had only been five minutes in the house. I am quite sure that they will have torn up any letters that came for me. I am very much troubled about it. I hope there was nothing in Hinton's handwriting in your letter. I don't know in which part of London I shall settle.'

After three months of detailed correspondence they were now to see one another for the first time. Great was the curiosity on each side. She had accepted his invitation to hear Henry Norman's lecture on Swinburne, before the Progressive Society. It was the 18th of May, 1884. 'I still clearly see her,' he wrote a few years ago, 'as I first saw her on calling at her lodgings in South Kensington to take her to an evening meeting; a short active robust woman, simple and unaffected in manner, and plainly dressed in loosely fitting garments, who sat on the couch with her hands resting on her thighs, her face expressive of latent radiant energy and eager receptivity to new impressions. She looked to me like a foreigner, a South European, possibly an Italian, and so many people who came in contact with her thought, both in England and abroad. . . . The next thing that struck one on first meeting her at that time, after her rather foreign air and that radiant receptivity which was doubtless associated with the warm glow of her large eyes, was her short stature (half an inch below five feet). This was emphasized by her plump rather massive figure and limbs.'[1]

She may have already 'a little overpassed the full first perfection of her girlish physical beauty,' but she was left with the more complex charm of the woman of thirty who is also a genius. Her intellectual interests and careless dress in no way detracted from her ex-

[1] *The Life of Olive Schreiner*, 161–62.

tremely feminine nature. She was warm, tender, impulsive, with an air of helplessness that made men want to protect her. She was brilliant, eloquent, enthusiastic, and yet steeped in the tragic sense of life. For Ellis she was like no one he had ever met, like no one he would ever meet.

'My dear Mr. Ellis,' she wrote two days later, 'I enjoyed going with you to that lecture so much. Thank you for coming for me. If you are not too busy and do not feel it would be a waste of time I should be glad if you could sometimes come and see me. It would be a help to me. I have made up my mind not to leave town just yet.' The following Sunday they went again to The Progressive Association. On Monday she wrote: 'You must come and see me whenever you care to. If you tell me what time you are coming I will stay in. I wish I was really your sister; it would be very nice.' Ellis paid her two more visits that week. After the second she noted in her journal: 'I like these rooms (32 Fitzroy Street). Ellis came to see me. I did not like him very much at first, but now I do, more and more.' [1]

Olive Schreiner was then a celebrity, with numerous friends and admirers, including distinguished gentlemen of marital aspirations. Yet few of them could begin to understand her strange nature and she turned in full sympathy to young Ellis, who was ostensibly nothing more than an obscure medical student dabbling in literature. During the next five and a half years they met often when she was in London and occasionally in the country, and exchanged letters almost daily. It was the mutual devotion of two delicate, retiring individuals who could not easily encourage friendships. His equanimity and patience were the

[1] *The Life of Olive Schreiner*, 167.

complements of her emotional instability and hasty, unqualified judgments. In her period of growing despair and his of crucial beginnings, they were bulwarks for one another.

'I want to do so much work,' she wrote to him late in June. 'You don't know how much better I am mentally since I knew you.' And a week later: 'If I feel wanting a letter very badly I will write and ask you for one. And when I want a little love, expressed love, I will write and ask for that too.' And at the end of July: 'I am so afraid of caring for you much. I feel such a bitter feeling with myself if I feel I am perhaps going to.... In that you are myself I love you; in that you are a man I am afraid of you and shrink from you.... Do you know it is you who have made me feel so young? Almost altogether you. I feel younger, much, than when I was a girl of ten. I think of you like a tall angel, as you looked at the Progressive meeting.' And ten weeks later: 'You are the first human being who has been perfect rest for me.' And at the end of nine months' friendship: 'If I had passion for you perhaps I couldn't have this feeling (I think it's like Montaigne's for his friend) and this is something much more rare and I think higher. It is no figure of speech when I say that you are my other self. You have taken a place in my life which no marriage or passionate love of mine could ever take from you. My boy, my own, for so many years I have longed to meet a mind that should understand me, that should take away from the loneliness of my life. Now I have found it.'

Ellis so quickly realized that there could be no question of his marrying Olive Schreiner that the idea of it was scarcely even formulated. In those years she was almost pathologically opposed to marriage for herself and yet by no means willing to overstep the bounds of

sexual convention, in the manner of her idol, George Sand. 'More and more,' she wrote to Ellis in January, 1886, 'I feel that marriage is not and cannot be a right thing for a nature like mine. If I am to live I must be free, and under existing conditions I feel more and more that no kind of sexual relationship can be good and pure but marriage.' On the 4th of February: 'Oh, Havelock, why will people not understand that I am not a marrying woman?' On the 19th of April: 'I would like so much to have a child, but I couldn't *bear* to be married; neither could I bear any relationship that was not absolutely open to all the world — so I could never have one.' It was in large measure as 'her boy' that she looked on Ellis and assuaged her tremendous desire for motherhood.

On the 1st of April, 1888, she wrote to him: 'Isn't it funny that I felt that you were ill and was unhappy *before* your mother's letter came. But perhaps the fact that you didn't write to tell me you'd got home made me fancy something.' [1] This refers to the scarlet fever which broke out in Henry a day or two after his return from medical duty at Blackburn. He was in very serious condition and his mother insisted on nursing him, although she had never had the disease. She contracted it and died suddenly on the 13th of April, in the very prime of her life, a great loss to all of her adoring family. With the years, Mrs. Ellis had grown beautifully mellow, more and more tolerant, in spite of her very strong personal convictions. It is noteworthy that she made no effort to interfere with her son's friendship for Olive Schreiner, to 'save' him from a woman older than he and publicly known as an agnostic.

'Good-bye, my old Harry Boy,' Olive Schreiner

[1] *Letters*, 134.

wrote from Mentone in February, 1889, 'the one person that ever quite truly loved me. I shall be glad when you marry, and yet, you know, something will be gone out of my life.' In the autumn of 1889 her aimless pilgrimage carried her back to South Africa, where, after five more years of discontent, she married Ellis's opposite, S. C. Cronwright, an intellectual farmer, a breeder of sheep and ostriches, and an accomplished athlete, who was capable, according to his wife, of knocking down seven men with one fist!

As for Ellis, it was well for him and for the world that his affection for Olive Schreiner did not culminate in matrimony. Not only would her attacks of asthma have been a great strain on him. He would have been constantly troubled by her periodic fits of melancholy and unending protests against the injustice of the world. Although Ellis assumed that the truth lay in *nuances*, she habitually dealt in extreme judgments of black and white, yielded quickly to immediate impressions and was thoroughly happy only in that unearthly realm which she described so beautifully in her 'dreams' and 'allegories.' Humor was not her strong point and she was capable at times of a sententiousness that must have been rather annoying. Yet a more grievous flaw was her inability to fulfil her promise as an artist. After *The Story of an African Farm* she lived for forty years without doing another sustained piece of work. In 1927 *From Man to Man*, the book she started in her teens and mentioned constantly in the eighties, was published, posthumously, unfinished. 'I am only a broken and untried possibility,' she once said all too truly. This failure was a source of subtle torture for Ellis, so deeply does he reverence human ability and resent the waste of it. He is highly prac-

tical, almost cruel, in demanding that extraordinary people realize fully their powers. He is far more tolerant of the sins of commission than of omission. After those early years Olive Schreiner became for him the tragic incarnation of unspent genius.

With all these qualifications, brutal in their literalness, Olive Schreiner remained a very great woman, a glory to her sex, to South Africa and to English literature. She was the outstanding friend of Ellis's life, and the first, perhaps the only human being, to whom he was able to pour out his soul. She could understand his Australian background, his 'silent passivity,' his fondest aspirations. She was the first person with whom he talked candidly on sex questions. 'I never discussed these matters with school fellows or companions, nor, except very slightly and superficially, with MacKay.' She had herself hoped to write a huge treatise on woman, but possessed neither the method nor erudition for such a task. She was splendidly fitted, with her remarkable honesty and keen insight, to survey the ground. Older than he, famous by her own achievement, she turned to him when he was at the outset of his career and gave him the benefit of her restless, radiant spirit. In his middle twenties, when he was still a medical student, it was something to have the full confidence of a woman who shared the gifts of George Sand and Emily Brontë. She may have been a child in many ways, but as Ellis has said, 'those who learnt to love her felt that she was a divine child.'

Among Olive Schreiner's hundreds of letters to Ellis between 1884 and 1889, there were numerous prophecies of his later achievements and growing fame. In January, 1888, she wrote: 'When I want to go to Trafalgar Square and fight the enemies of Freedom of the hour wildly and get my head broken, *you*

say I am a fool, and you are *right*. When I run about after prostitutes, —— writes to tell me I am a *fool* and wicked for leaving my work, and he is *right*. Goethe was a far more highly moral man than Schiller. The man who sits quietly in his study, writing and working out a great scientific truth, while his little petty state is going to pieces, is greater, more human, more moral than one who, like myself, would rush out wildly and fight. You of all people I ever met (infinitely more than ——) are a man of the study. You are perfectly dead on the other side. That is your weakness and your strength. That is why you will do great and useful work in the world. . . . Your very medical work is not for its own sake, and give you £200 a year and you would curl yourself up in abstract study and thought for the rest of your life. In time of revolution and war you will never be in the market place.' [1]

[1] *The Letters of Olive Schreiner*, 127–28.

CHAPTER IX

THE NEW SPIRIT

In the midst of strenuous work at St. Thomas's, Ellis haunted the British Museum and read more diversely than ever, determined that the mere study of medicine should not interfere with his literary activities. Like Shaw in this decade, he was laying up a vast store of information and trying his hand at whatever came in his way. If the problem happened to be the curious resemblance which he discovered between two ballads of Villon and two old Latin hymns, he checked it up carefully and wrote a letter to *The Academy*. Or if he felt uncertain about his own attitude toward Thomas Hardy, he read over all the novels from *Desperate Remedies* to *Two on a Tower*, spent the Easter days at Weymouth in order to study the Wessex country, and wrote a comprehensive essay on Hardy, published in *The Westminster Review*.

In the fall of 1883 Ellis was shown a little book, printed anonymously, called *Towards Democracy*, which he put aside, after a first glance, as 'Whitman and water.' But a little later he picked up a copy on a second-hand bookstall, and reached a very different opinion. He wrote to the author, Edward Carpenter, and a warm friendship rapidly ensued, which has extended to the present day. Many common qualities drew them together — religious temperaments which had achieved serenity, genuine passion for simple living, early devotion to Shelley and later to Whitman, and the hope of shedding some light on the clouded issues of sex. Of the second edition of *Towards Democracy*, Ellis wrote in 1886: 'Our first thought on

opening this volume for the first time is that we have come across a weak imitation of Leaves of Grass; but on growing familiar with Towards Democracy we find that we have here a distinct individuality, with, indeed, points of contact with Whitman, and using the same mode of expression but a new and genuine voice, nevertheless, not a mere echo. Even the form is not quite the same; it is flowing and eloquent rather than with the massive weight of Whitman's interrupted elephantine steps. There is a strenuous vitality in Whitman; his voice is like a trumpet; he radiates life and energy from a vast centre of vital heat; he is the expression of an immense dilation of the individual personality. But in this volume the bounds of personality are, as it were, loosened; and we have instead the soothing voice of an almost impersonal return to joy. Mr. Carpenter on the whole does not strive nor cry; he lifts up rather a tender voice of love and healing. It is the note of consolation rather than the stimulating "barbaric yap" that we hear.' [1]

Quite as ambitious as the Hardy study were three separate articles on recent tendencies in English fiction, poetry and criticism. Ellis insisted that the novelist writes contemporary history, whether intentionally or not, and that 'science and morals, so far from destroying, have re-created fiction.' Thus far, it was the English women, such as Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, who had exhibited the analytic power common to the supreme French novelists. 'William Morris, who looks back yearningly to the popular art of the Middle Ages, deals out scorn to the novel; he fails to see that fiction *is* our modern popular art. After all it is the human soul in its myriad and ever-changing aspects which is the one permanently inter-

[1] *Papers for the Times*, Feb., 1886, p. 82.

esting thing; it is of little consequence what art it chooses for its expression. And that is why novels have a significance that is not exhausted in the brief hour of amusement that they give us — a significance which, if we see it rightly, goes deep down to the roots of our life.' [1]

Among contemporary poets Ellis gave a high rank to his friend, Roden Noel, an impressive, histrionic aristocrat, with democratic leanings, who was then living at Anerley and seeing a good deal of Ellis. Noel wrote superior philosophical verse, some splendid sea poetry and *A Little Child's Monument*, but, in spite of his own opinion, could hardly be placed on a level with Swinburne or Rossetti. Nearer to Noel in poetic gift was John Addington Symonds, whose sonnet sequences, *Animi Figura* and *Vagabunduli Libellus*, Ellis spoke of discriminatingly. At this time he also considered Symonds 'the strongest, sanest and most genuinely English among our critics,' not possessing a definite method like Pater, 'the perilous gift of intuition,' like Swinburne or Matthew Arnold's excessive interest in moral conduct and formal beauty. Ellis concluded that on the whole the English critics of the day were a feeble lot. 'Criticism is a complex development of psychological science, and if it is to reach any large and strong growth it must be apprehended in all its manifestations.' Thus he began a serious study of the principles of criticism and prepared himself to produce some of the most notable essays of our time.

In reviewing Maxime du Camp's *Souvenirs Littéraires*, Bebel's work on woman and a symposium, *The Woman Question in Europe*, Ellis described at length the contents of the books, and this obvious method he has continued to observe ever since, unable to assume

[1] *The Indian Review*, Sept., 1884.

that book reviewing was primarily an opportunity for exhibitionistic gestures. In 1886–87 he was in charge of the theology section of three numbers of *The Westminster Review*; that is, he summarized more or less briefly some fifty miscellaneous volumes, ranging from *The Religion of the Future* and *The Fathers of Jesus* to *Links of Loving Kindness*. It was a curious medley, of which only two books made any lasting impression on him, a new translation of part of the Confucian *Lî-Kî* in the Sacred Books of the East Series, and the travels of Fâ-hien, the Chinese monk. From these two, especially the former, dates Ellis's interest in things Chinese. He was delighted to learn that in China life was regulated by music and ceremony and was altogether considered an art. As a lover of flowers and of gods and of rituals, he has never been of that crude type of radical who would destroy the harmonizing graces in order to reform society. The opening chapter of his *Dance of Life* centres around a general discussion of Chinese ideals of culture.

At an excursion of The Fellowship of the New Life, Ellis met young Ernest Rhys, who was then starting the popular Camelot Series and surrounding himself with many competent helpers. During the first year of the series, 1886, Ellis edited two volumes of Landor's *Imaginary Conversations*, which he began to read in Australia and has loved ever since as the work of 'the last great writer of English.' His own style has at times a tenderness and a muted grandeur which may be a distant echo of the heroic *Conversations*. He also edited an excellent selection of *Heine's Prose Writings*, with revisions of previous English versions and a new translation of the *Florentine Nights*. In 1888 he made Ibsen easily accessible to English readers with the Camelot volume of three of the social dramas, *The Pil-*

lars of Society, *Ghosts* and *An Enemy of the People*, the first two translated by William Archer and the last by Eleanor Marx-Aveling; fourteen thousand copies were sold within four years, an unusual record for those days. Later Ellis brought out a third work by Landor and Vasari's *Lives of the Painters*.

Of this period, Ernest Rhys, long known as the editor of Everyman's Library, wrote in a letter on the 3d of March, 1927: 'Ellis was a shy, silent, meditative-looking, bearded young man then, with a voice of curious, thin, high-pitched tones. He was not at all diffident, however, but keenly alive to art, poetry, the drama, etc. He used to sup with me now and again at No. 59 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea (Holman Hunt's old house), and discuss books and plays, when he was planning his "Mermaid Series" (for which I did the Dekker volume). He translated Heine's prose and edited Landor too, for my old Camelot series. He was already a convinced devotee in the sort of philosophical empiricism to be inferred from his books; but he was a quiet advocate, not at all vocal or dogmatic. He had a vein of humor, and I think, took a sly pleasure in the aberrations of men, their endless tricks, vanities and the rest. He observed closely, endlessly. He loved a good play, a good talker, a pretty face, and loved the sun, the south, travel and the sea.'

Ellis's vein of humor is precisely a sense of the ironical, the grotesque, the absurd which pervades all life and especially the realm of sex. It does not call for loud laughter or shining witticisms, but only for a quiet twinkle in the eyes. It is not a mark of superciliousness but of intellectual humility, lightened by the suspicion that God Himself may be touched with Original Sin. As Ellis says, every plant or animal may appear as an absurd commentary on the genus from which it has de-

parted while man spends most of his life in trying not to recognize his animal ancestry.[1] 'Wherever Man flowers into Genius, wherever, that is to say, he becomes most quintessentially Man, he can never take the world seriously.'[2]

While preparing the two Landor volumes in 1886 Ellis decided that a series containing the best plays of the older English dramatists would have a wide welcome as the more satisfactory editions, such as those of Dyce and Bullen, were either out of print or exceedingly expensive. Early in March, 1886, he wrote this suggestion to Vizetelly and Company, a firm which was publishing many foreign books in English translation, including the novels of Zola. They replied promptly: 'If you would trouble yourself to submit your scheme in detail, giving an approximate list of the plays, with some idea of the number and size of the volumes they would occupy, we will make the necessary calculations and see how far the undertaking promises to be a remunerative one.' And a few weeks later the decisive communication: 'On the understanding that it will be practicable to secure efficient editorship for the volumes you propose, on the terms you mention, we shall be quite willing to engage in the undertaking. It would be essential that one or two names of mark should be secured for the preliminary announcement of the series, otherwise it would certainly fall flat. We should be quite willing to pay you for the time and trouble you may give to the matter generally, which is one we cannot take under our charge.' Thus began the Mermaid Series which has made Elizabethan and Restoration drama accessible to the general public for forty years. Ellis, surprised at the reception of his

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 99.
[2] *Ibid.*, I, 256.

scheme, found himself a general editor at twenty-seven.

Seeking competent editors for the various authors, he was soon in touch with some of the leading critical minds of England. In June, John Addington Symonds was writing to Horatio Brown: 'I have promised to do selections and introductions to Webster, Tourneur and Heywood for a series started by Havelock Ellis. He also wants me to write a short general introduction on the Elizabethan drama.' [1] Early in 1887 appeared the first volume, the plays of Marlowe, edited by Ellis, with Symonds's preliminary essay. A few days after it was put on sale a well-meaning woman objected to phrases in the appendix, which contained a note of one Richard Bame on Marlowe's 'damnable opinions and judgment of relygion and scorne of Gods word.' In order to prevent any serious trouble the books were quickly withdrawn and asterisks substituted for corruption. This was Ellis's only public contact with Mrs. Grundy for some time, although he had given her a general affront by insisting that the text of each play in the Mermaid Series be unexpurgated.

The two Middleton volumes were introduced by Swinburne's well-known essay revised, but were edited by Ellis himself. With a strong stomach for realism and a passion for any kind of document that seems to reveal accurately the ways of men, he was naturally attracted to Middleton's precise, unvarnished picture of London life. For the same reason he chose for himself one of the few Elizabethan plays, untouched by Italian artifice, which portrays rural existence convincingly, *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, by Henry Porter. Of that obscure author, Ellis wrote: 'His deep and modulated voice lifted in no sudden fer-

[1] *Letters and Papers of John Addington Symonds*, edited by Horatio F. Brown, 192.

vours or exaltations, expresses the frank and conscious homeliness, the warm-blooded humanity, the English heartiness of man. Many golden galleons of our drama lie sunken at the bottom of the sea, few that we would more gladly recover than the stout oak-ships of Henry Porter.'

With a more special interest Ellis took up the plays of John Ford, who stands 'apart among his fellows, without master or follower,' according to Swinburne. To Ellis 'Ford was the most modern of the tribe to whom he belonged. He was a sensitive observer who had meditated deeply on the springs of human action, especially in women. He was an analyst; he strained the limits of his art to the utmost; he forboded new ways of expression. Thus he is less nearly related to the men who wrote *Othello*, and *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and *Valentinian*, than to those poets and artists of the naked human soul, the writer of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and the yet greater writer of *Madame Bovary*.'[1]

After Ellis had brought out some ten or fifteen volumes in the Mermaid Series, and arranged for many others, including his own edition of George Chapman's plays, Vizetelly was prosecuted for publishing Zola and practically ruined. The series was then taken over by Fisher Unwin, who struck Ellis's name off the books and disregarded his existence as general editor. Some years later Ellis completed an essay on Chapman for an American series which failed to materialize, and it is not yet published. His view of the grand old scholar, the Elizabethan Landor, is indicated by a footnote in the study of Nietzsche. Alluding to Nietzsche's high praise of French characters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ellis said: 'One may be allowed to regret that Nietzsche was not equally discriminating in

[1] *John Ford*, Mermaid Series, xvi–xvii.

his judgment of our country. Had he not been blinded by the spiritual plebeianism of the nineteenth century in England, he might also have discerned in certain periods some of the same ardent and heroic qualities which he recognised in sixteenth century France, the more easily since at that time the same Renaissance wave effected a considerable degree of union between France and England. In George Chapman, for instance, at his finest and lucidest moments the typical ethical representative of our greatest literary age, Nietzsche would have found a man after his own heart, not only one who scarcely yielded to himself in generous admiration of the great qualities of the French spirit but a man of "absolute and full soul" who was almost a precursor of his own "immoralism," a lover of freedom, of stoic self-reliance, one who was ever seeking to enlarge the discipline of a fine culture in the direction of moral freedom and dignity.' [1]

The Elizabethans were more than a literary preference for Ellis. They were akin to his nature and he wrote of them wistfully, in an undertone of regret for spacious days and spacious minds, when safety was not the cardinal virtue, Victoria was not the arbiter of elegance, and distance was not the essence of enchantment.

> 'As prospectives, the nearer that they be,
> Yield better judgment to the judging eye;
> Things seen far off are lessened in the eye,
> When their true shape is seen being hard by.' [2]

Ellis would have been thoroughly at home in a quiet corner of the Mermaid Tavern, talking of ships, or sex, or Seneca. Not a violent roistering fellow himself, he

[1] *Affirmations*, 44–45.

[2] Henry Porter: *The Two Angry Women of Abington*. Cf. Lascelles Abercrombie: *Romanticism*, 40–50.

would have admired Marlowe and been a friend of young Jack Donne. Yet of all that tribe, he would have enjoyed most, perhaps, the rugged, scholarly, isolated Chapman, who held 'all learning but an art to live well.'

> 'Let me learn anything that fits a man,
> In any stables shown, as well as stages.'

The second number in the Mermaid Series was a group of Massinger's plays edited by Arthur Symons, then twenty-two. Ellis had been charmed by an article of his on Mistral, the modern Provençal poet, and on learning that he was working on the Shakespeare facsimiles issued by Quaritch, at once decided to secure his coöperation. They met one day by appointment before a picture in the National Gallery. 'There was nothing singular in the aspect of Ellis,' Symons has written recently; 'he was then, as always, shy, taciturn, with morbid eyes, and a face in which honesty was united with a peculiar aloofness. From that curious meeting of two men of absolutely different temperaments — and perhaps for the very reason of that contrast — resulted a friendship which has never essentially changed.'[1] Symons, born in Wales of Cornish parents, had also grown up a solitary, educated himself precociously on voluminous reading and become a devotee of that 'religion of the eyes,' that 'universal science of beauty,' which made him one of the notable poets and great critics of his generation. Unfortunately his early preoccupation with 'sin' and his associations in the nineties have prevented a later generation from appreciating the depth and delicacy of his

[1] *The Double-Dealer*, Feb., 1922. It should be remembered that Symons has the habit of using such adjectives as 'morbid,' 'perverse,' 'vicious,' and 'satanic,' in a complimentary sense, and consequently his mention of Ellis's 'morbid eyes' is not literally descriptive.

taste. It is so easy to call him 'decadent' and overlook his wise comments on all seven of the arts. 'Arthur Symons,' says Yeats, 'more than any man I have ever known, could slip as it were into the mind of another, and my thoughts gained in richness and in clearness from his sympathy, nor shall I ever know how much my practice and my theory owe to the passages that he read me from Catullus and from Verlaine and Mallarmé.' [1] As a knowing young Bohemian with a passion for the urban, the artificial, the sophisticated, Symons became a valuable counterbalance to Ellis's interest in such people as Whitman, Carpenter and Olive Schreiner.

As soon as he found that his services were no longer required on the Mermaid Series, Ellis laid before the Walter Scott Publishing Company plans for a Contemporary Science Series, which would tend to supplant the International Scientific Series, then coming to a close. His plans were enthusiastically accepted, he was made General Editor and a prospectus announced that 'in the Contemporary Science Series all the questions of modern Life — the various social and politico-economical problems of to-day, the most recent researches in the knowledge of man, the past and present experiences of the race, and the nature of its environment — will be frankly investigated and clearly presented.' Given a free hand to select the authors and the subjects to be treated, Ellis was naturally interested in working out his own ideas, with a proper regard for the business end, as he was to receive an extra commission on large sales. In the wish to attract immediate attention to the series, presenting a vital topic at the outset, he asked Patrick Geddes to write a book on sex. Geddes, who had contributed the articles on sex and

[1] W. B. Yeats: *Autobiographies*, 394.

reproduction to the recent edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, was not well known then and his wide-ranging social interests were hardly suspected. In collaboration with young J. Arthur Thomson, Geddes wrote *The Evolution of Sex*, which appeared in October, 1889, as the first number of the Contemporary Science Series, and has for years remained one of the standard authorities in the field. Other volumes rapidly followed, including *The Criminal* by Ellis and his translation of various foreign works, Lombroso's *Man of Genius*, Marie De Manceïne's *Sleep* and Sergi's *Mediterranean Race*. The eighteenth number, published in 1892, was *The Grammar of Science*, written by Karl Pearson at Ellis's request; one of the pioneer criticisms of scientific orthodoxy, it has had considerable influence in latter-day philosophy and received a melancholy obeisance in *The Education of Henry Adams*. Among the other titles were Weismann's *Germ-Plasm*, Hobson's *Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, Starbuck's *Psychology of Religion* and Karl von Zittel's *History of Geology and Palæontology*. Ellis planned all the earlier numbers of the series, but after it was well started authors proposed subjects to him. The best seller was Albert Moll's *Hypnotism*, and the last to be published, appropriately enough, was Robert Michels's *Sexual Ethics*. The series was brought to a close by the war in 1914, after being the chief source of Ellis's modest income for twenty-five years. As founder and editor of both the Mermaid Series and the Contemporary Science Series, he must be considered one of the far-reaching educators of his generation.

In accordance with an early decision not to bring out a book before he was thirty, Ellis completed in the summer of 1889 *The New Spirit* which did not actually appear until the spring of 1890, shortly after his thirty-

HAVELOCK ELLIS AT THIRTY

first birthday. At what seemed to be the opening of a new era, a century since the French Revolution, he sought the pulse of his age through five of its representative figures, Diderot, Heine, Whitman, Ibsen and Tolstoy.[1] Personally he wished at the beginning of his career to present his bird's-eye view of the world and outline his general programme, much as the young Jacques Rivière did a generation later in his first work, *Études*. 'The new spirit' is not at all identical with 'modernity,' but is 'a quickening of the pulse of life such as may take place in any age, though my tracings are only of a recent acceleration.'

He saw the future complicated by the further advance of science, the radical emancipation of women and the less external problems of democracy. Diderot's 'fermentative genius' exemplified the best elements of the scientific faith while Ibsen disclosed the powerful roots of a natural aristocracy. The tragic oscillations of the period found their embodiments in the all-too-lucid Heine, who contrasts strangely with the inarticulate aspirations of Tolstoy. But all these diverse tendencies come to a higher harmony in the giant figure of Walt Whitman, to whom Ellis devoted his most enthusiastic language. 'Whitman represents, for the first time since Christianity swept over the world, the reintegration, in a sane and whole-hearted form, of the instincts of the entire man, and therefore he has a significance which we can hardly over-estimate.' 'He has tossed "a new gladness and roughness among men and women." He has opened a fresh channel of Nature's

[1] The chapters on Ibsen and Heine were previously published as introductions in Camelot volumes, and that on Diderot had appeared in *The Westminster Review*. The earliest part of *The New Spirit*, the fine Conclusion, was written about 1884 when Ellis was still planning his book on religion. The long Introduction was finished just before *The New Spirit* went to press.

forces into human life — the largest since Wordsworth, and more fit for human use — "the amplitude of the earth, and the coarseness and sexuality of the earth, and the great charity of the earth, and the equilibrium also."' Whitman bridged the artificial chasm between matter and spirit, put forth an honest, healthy conception of egoism and helped to reclaim the poisonous marshes of sex. 'We can no longer intrude our crude distinctions of high and low. We cannot now step in and say that this link in the chain is eternally ugly and that is eternally beautiful. For irrational disgust, the varying outcome of individual idiosyncrasy, there is doubtless still room; it is incalculable, and cannot be reached. But that rational disgust which was once held to be common property, has received from science its death-blow. In the growth of a sense of purity, which Whitman, not alone has annunciated, lies one of our chief hopes for morals, as well as for art.'

Yet the strenuous, once-born soul of Whitman does not lead us far into the religious realm. His inexhaustible nature had little need for the deep repose, the mystical resignation which Ellis considers the essence of religion. That essence is formulated as far as possible in the Introduction and Conclusion of *The New Spirit*, which was an indirect confession of the author's deepest experience. 'Religion is the anodyne cup — indeed of our own blood — at which we slake our thirst when our weary hearts are torn by personal misery, or weary and distracted by life's heat and restless hurry.' 'To drink deep of that cup is to have all the motor energies of life paralyzed.' 'Religion is hidden by many a strange garment, but its heart is the same and built firmly into the human structure. The old mystic spoke truly when he defined God as an ineffable sigh. Now and again we must draw a deep

breath of relief, and that is religion.' To this experience dogma and institution are alike irrelevant. The common denominator of religion lies in the attitude of the worshipper. It matters little whether we say with Lucretius, 'Piety is the beholding of all things with a mind at ease,' or with Jesus, 'Father, not my will, but Thine, be done.'

The obscure centre of awareness, with its physiological counterpart, which may be named the soul, endures a ceaseless bombardment from infinite angles. In consequence, it contracts, sinks into itself, writhes, suffers with aching desire. But there are also 'those incomparably rarer contacts at which the soul for a while and in varying degrees expands with a glad sense of freedom.' This expansion may take the form of hearty Rabelaisian laughter, of the artist's enthusiasm or the beholder's joy, of the lover's ecstasy or the thinker's vision: wherever a tyrannical tension of life gives way to a rich emotional release, there is a religious experience. 'This enlarged diastole of the soul that we call religion' is supremely manifested in that sense of complete harmony with nature which the great mystics enjoy. 'The perpetual annunciation of this union has ever been the chief gladness of life.' 'There is no larger freedom for man.' It is the supreme affirmation because it is the perfect surrender. Amidst the complexity and confusion of modernity the anodyne cup has been terribly neglected. The religious need is so old that we condemn it as unfashionable. In making acceleration one with progress, we have forgotten the inner abode of peace.

So much for *The New Spirit*, a group of brilliant, prophetic essays which compose for many readers a modern classic. But it was originally considered a bold, bad book, and it was more widely, violently reviewed

than any other work by Ellis. *The Spectator* began: 'Mr. Havelock Ellis — if "Mr." be the proper title, of which we have considerable doubt,' and ended, 'We cannot imagine anything of which it would be more necessary for human nature to purge itself than the "New Spirit" of Havelock Ellis.' Said *The Dundee Advertiser*: 'On such a writer advice is thrown away, and we only refer to this unpleasant compilation of cool impudence and effrontery to warn our readers against it. We deny that the new spirit of the age has so much of the fleshly element in it as he would have us believe. He enlarges upon the all-pervading influence of sex in human affairs in a manner which is more than immodest and verges on pruriency.' According to *The Athenæum* Mr. Ellis must be very inquiring, 'for we have seldom met with one who knows so many things that other people do not know.' 'Frequently in the volume,' announced the American *Nation*, contemptuously, 'one comes upon remarks that suggest a pæan upon sex, scientifically, philosophically and poetically.' And the genial critic of *The World*: 'A more foolish, unwholesome, perverted piece of sentimental cant we have never wasted our time over.' The friendly review of Oliver Elton in *The Academy* was one of the few exceptions to a general chorus of abuse. Ellis was rather dazed as well as pleased by the stir his first child had caused, and in order to reach a wider audience arranged with the Scott Company to bring out a shilling edition. The original publishers, Bell and Sons, were glad to strike so obnoxious a volume from their list.

In 1886 or '87 Ellis had picked up a second-hand copy of Tarde's *La Criminalité Comparée*, which was not sympathetic to Lombroso or criminal anthropology, but the discovery that there was such a science fascinated him immediately. He went over the growing liter-

ature on the subject in French, German and Italian, learnt all he could from England and the United States and entered into correspondence with various prison officials. In the fall of 1889, when *The New Spirit* was ready for press, he dashed off a short book, *The Criminal*, a remarkable *tour de force* which he is glad to have achieved once only, as his characteristic method is slow and patient and requires first-hand knowledge of the subject under discussion. The excuse for *The Criminal* was that no other Englishman seemed to be familiar with the Continental developments of criminal anthropology. He simply wished to present to English readers a summary of those developments which had been so stimulating to himself. 'Lombroso founded a vigorous school of investigators, but I have never formed a part of it,' wrote Ellis a few years ago. 'I was merely an outsider who enjoyed the spectacle. I realized the genuine genius of the man, I saw that he had revealed a new and immensely fruitful field of study; but I was careful to point out that a discoverer is by no means the best surveyor of the land he reveals, and Columbus, as we know, mistook Cuba for Japan.' [1]

This early work in criminology led Ellis directly to the problem of genius, for at that time the dominating school of Lombroso considered the criminal and the genius complementary forms of degeneration. In preparing Lombroso's *Man of Genius* for the Contemporary Science Series Ellis rebelled against such pathological interpretations and began to seek for himself a more balanced position. He could continue to study genius as a mental anomaly, retaining some of the psychological and psychiatric notions of the Italians, while employing the more objective, statistical method

[1] 'The Progress of Criminology,' *The Medical Review of Reviews*, Oct., 1919.

of Galton. Thus Ellis hoped to avoid both an unjustifiable emphasis on morbidity and a premature sense of precision. A short article on 'The Ancestry of Genius,' giving evidence of the mixed, racial heritage of some recent English and American authors, was the first of his many studies in this field. In 1889 he became a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, where he often met Galton for whom he had the greatest admiration. He still remembers with pleasure the time that Galton took him home to lunch. To Ellis Galton was 'the typical man of genius in whose hands everything turns to science. And there was no solemnity or air of superiority; it was always as though he were playing a game. And with a feeling of the humor of it all.'

Shortly before *The Criminal* was finished, Ellis sent one of the opening chapters to *The Journal of Mental Science*, where it was published in January, 1890. The editor and distinguished alienist, D. Hack Tuke, became very friendly to Ellis and began sending him, for review, books and periodicals on criminal anthropology. In 1892 Ellis contributed to Tuke's *Dictionary of Psychological Medicine* three articles, that on the 'influence of sex in insanity' being his first public statement on the subject of sex. After 1894 he was writing for *The Journal of Mental Science* 'retrospects' on normal, abnormal, religious and physiological psychology, not to mention other special topics. He continued this for three decades, making precise abstracts of hundreds and hundreds of volumes, periodicals and pamphlets. The magnitude of the list can only be appreciated by running through the files of the journal, which is badly indexed. Even such a hasty survey helps to confirm the suspicion that Ellis is one of the most erudite men living.

While the storm swirled around *The New Spirit* and *The Criminal* was still on the press, Ellis went in April, 1890, to Paris [1] for a long holiday with Arthur Symons. They found comfortable quarters at the famous old Hôtel Corneille, across from the Gardens of the Luxembourg, and were soon joined by Louie Ellis, who had finished her dressmaking apprenticeship. A charming trio they made — the vivacious little blue-eyed woman strolling about the boulevards and galleries with her tall brother whose dark brown hair, reddish silken beard and golden mustache formed a striking harmony, and the precocious æsthete, Symons, with his delicate chiselled features, transparent complexion and brilliant, searching eyes. On one occasion the three of them had cigars for the first time; Ellis threw his away, characteristically, half smoked, while his two companions finished theirs and felt rather ill. Evidently Ellis mentioned this incident in one of his long journal letters to Olive Schreiner, for she wrote back: 'Of course you don't like tobacco, and I shouldn't think Symons would; it is carrying coals to Newcastle. Louie would like it and it would do her as much good as it would do you harm. The effect of tobacco is like opium. What you need is much more a glass of champagne than a pipe. To me all stimulants are poison. "Calm me, my God, and keep me calm." . . . Just because a stimulant raises my nervous irritability it will be a poison to me though a medicine to you, when I am above the healthy normal average of nervous irritability and you are below it.' [1] Whether absinthe be a stimulant or a narcotic, Symons and Ellis tried it, the former at once recording his sensations in a sonnet, the latter deciding not

[1] Ellis was in Paris for a short time about 1885 with MacKay, and in 1889 with Symons, but neither trip was memorable.

[1] *The Letters of Olive Schreiner*, 188.

to try it again, as he always disliked the flavor of anise.

Besides countless jaunts together each of them had a special interest in Paris: Miss Ellis was studying costume-designing, Symons was drawn to the music-halls and Ellis frequented the clinics and hospitals. At this time, 1890, Freud was on the verge of his epoch-making discoveries in hysteria, thanks partly to the inspiration of Charcot, with whom he had studied in Paris several years earlier. Ellis respected Charcot's genius and attended one or two of his demonstrations, but did not find his personality attractive. 'Anyone who was privileged,' wrote Ellis several years later, 'to observe his methods of work at the Salpêtrière will easily recall the great master's towering figure; the disdainful expression, sometimes, even, it seemed, a little sour; the lofty bearing which enthusiastic admirers called Napoleonic. The questions addressed to the patient were cold, distant, sometimes impatient. Charcot clearly had little faith in the value of any results so attained. One may well believe, also, that a man whose superficial personality was so haughty and awe-inspiring to strangers would, in any case have had the greatest difficulty in penetrating the mysteries of a psychic world so obscure and elusive as that presented by the hysterical.' [1]

However, it was the personal meetings with many notable men that made these weeks especially memorable to Ellis and Symons. They found the charming disreputable old Verlaine in his haunt of the Latin Quarter. On a few unforgettable Tuesday evenings they were among the privileged guests of Stéphane Mallarmé whose humble hospitality was evidenced by the bowl of tobacco that passed up and down the table. Beside the host, 'the most significant and influential figure in modern French literature,' sat his devout

[1] *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, I, 218–19.

disciple, Henri de Régnier, to whose luminous prose Ellis has often referred in recent years.[1] In his secluded workshop Ellis and Symons talked with Rodin, and also had several conversations with Huysmans.

In these days began the friendship of Ellis and Remy de Gourmont, which lasted until the latter's death in 1915. Through that long period they corresponded intermittently, exchanged books and met from time to time when Ellis was in Paris. It was a natural attraction of remarkably similar natures. In both a profound scepticism dissolved ultimately into mysticism. In both monastic simplicity combined with epicurean ease. They shunned public gatherings and led a secluded, almost secret, private life. Ellis's studies in sex are paralleled in a small way by Gourmont's *Le Physique de l'Amour* and various separate essays. Humanists *par excellence*, they delighted in revealing the delicate *nuances* of desire, and Ellis developed independently a method of analysis identical with Gourmont's '*dissociation des idées*.' What Ellis wrote in memory of his friend applies almost as well to himself: 'Anatole France, with a more limited range, concentrated himself on the story-telling form of literature and by that concentration has obtained a great legitimate success; he has also, in a way that was impossible to the more deeply sceptical Gourmont, taken a definite side in the questions of his own day, and along both these lines has come into close touch with the man in the street. Gourmont, whose genius was of a more daring and masculine quality, throughout his whole life held himself aloof from the world in which he was so passionately interested.'[2]

[1] Cf. Havelock Ellis: 'Henri de Régnier,' *North American Review*, March, 1915.

[2] *The New Republic*, Dec. 18, 1915.

After returning to London from enchanting Paris, Ellis went down to Cornwall for the first time, as temporary physician in the little village of Probus. It was after one of these sojourns, late in 1890, that he visited, at Lamorna, Miss Agnes Jones, who had been a friend of Hinton. Shortly before Ellis's arrival, a Miss Edith Lees, on a walking tour with her servant-companion, came to spend the night with Miss Jones. The independent Miss Lees was annoyed by the announced approach of the irrelevant male whom she knew slightly as an indifferent member of The Fellowship of the New Life and proposed to continue on her way. The fates intervened, however, in the shape of the tired feet of her fellow-tourist, and she agreed to remain. Consequently, that evening she and Ellis had their first real talk, enlivened by the fact that she had just read *The New Spirit* with great satisfaction. The next day Miss Jones and Ellis walked a few miles with Miss Lees towards Land's End. Two days later he went to see her at St. Ives — and returned to London with a yielding heart.

Edith Lees was a slender little woman, less than five feet tall, with amazing 'wide-angle' light blue eyes, a low musical voice and a radiant, challenging manner, quick in gesture, quicker in repartee, combining in unstable solution the most varied and striking qualities. 'Democratic yet dominating, combative yet sympathetic, hasty yet tenacious,' she was a bold and lively jester, protecting from the world at large a helpless, frightened child. Intense in her hatreds, sometimes impulsively cruel, she was constantly imposed upon because of her immense faith in human nature. She was at heart both an artist and a reformer, and the artist in her was always trying to cast out the reformer, who would never long be absent. A believer in moder-

ation, she worked and played under high pressure, through a lifetime of enthusiasms. Altogether she was a person of wonderful magnetism who fascinated even those whom she antagonized.

In December, 1891, Edith Lees and Havelock Ellis were married by the register of Paddington. Two daughters of Stopford Brooke witnessed for the bride, Louie Ellis for the groom. He was then nearly thirty-two, she three years younger. Their one vow to one another was mutual frankness. Each was to be economically independent, and in order to avoid the cruel routine of traditional matrimony, they agreed not to live constantly under the same roof. After the first two or three winters in her cottage near St. Ives in Cornwall, all the rest were spent at Carbis Bay, where she rented out cottages and ran a small farm, becoming quite proficient in dairying and breeding stock. The summers they often spent together in some interior county, during the nineties renting a bungalow on the heights of Hindhead, in Surrey. (The loveliest night that Ellis has ever known in England was at Hindhead, in October, 1892, when Tennyson lay dying close by at Haslemere.) For several months at least each year Ellis lived in his flat in London, where his wife joined him from time to time, and his trips on the Continent were often made without her. It was such arrangements that kept a freshness in all their relationship and made them pioneers, whether or not entirely successful, in what she called 'semi-detached marriage,' what is called to-day 'companionate marriage.'

Like Olive Schreiner, with whom she formed an affectionate friendship, Mrs. Ellis had a very unhappy childhood, suffered from a deep vein of melancholy and was subject to recurring attacks of disabling illness, the long advance of diabetes leading to her death in 1916,

at the age of fifty-four. It is a pathetically striking fact that Ellis, who sympathizes abnormally with the suffering of his friends, was deeply devoted over a period of thirty years, to two semi-invalids. (They were not generally known as such until the end of their lives; both were of good muscular development and usually gave the appearance of robust health.) Although passionately devoted to children, Mrs. Ellis was advised by physicians not to become a mother and in him the parental impulse was never strong.

'Two people with a greater convergence or a wider dissimilarity of tastes it would be difficult to find. One was intensely social, the other almost a recluse; one of them loved to have a telephone at her bedside, and at its summons to start out on an entirely unpremeditated mission or outing, while the other held the telephone in horror and liked to do things planned out well beforehand, finding in the anticipation of any given event more enjoyment than in its actual happening, and living for the most part more in the future or in the past than in the momentary present. One of them was a scientist and approached his work from the patient uphill path of scientific research; the other was an artist with no interest in scientific procedure, but often with luminous intuition or divination discovering the same truths. To counterbalance these dissimilarities, they both often liked the same people and the same books, shared the same views on the important things of life, adored travel, and to the same countries, and both loved doing their writing out of doors. He shared something of her joy in animals (there were always any number of cats and dogs around her in the country), and they both found rest and delight in music.' [1]

Mrs. Ellis continued to be the active spirit of The

[1] From an introduction by Marguerite Tracy to Mrs. Ellis's *The New*

Fellowship of the New Life until it ceased in 1898, but by that time she had lost most of her faith in organized groups and propaganda and was giving her best energies to writing. Her first novel, *Seaweed: A Cornish Idyll* (later published as *Kit's Woman*), was 'daring' in the best sense of the word and contained some well-drawn characters. In *My Cornish Neighbours* she first proved her ability to write short stories with a feeling for unity of place which Chesterton highly commended, and '*The Imperishable Wing* stands all alone by itself,' Ford Madox Ford once said, 'in a wilderness of sham renderings of what is called the Celtic temperament.' In other sketches and stories she combined fact, fantasy and allegory in a delicately moving way which some readers consider utterly unique. On the other hand she wrote forceful essays and lectured brilliantly on various aspects of love and domesticity, and on such 'forerunners' as James Hinton, Edward Carpenter, Nietzsche and Olive Schreiner. Toward the end of her life she was developing a technique for etching contemporary personalities and their ideas in brief compass, which might have led to her best work. Of her husband she said: 'He is so sincere that any woman loving him must feel the need of wings in order to protect him when he makes those deliberate statements which are often misunderstood by gross men and sentimental women.' Her writings may soon be forgotten, but she will be remembered by those who knew her as a flaming personality of great insight and courage, and

Horizon in Love and Life, a collection of essays and lectures, published posthumously; Miss Tracy's short but enthusiastic and well-informed account of Mrs. Ellis is the most satisfactory yet made. There are further notes by friends in two other volumes by Mrs. Ellis printed privately after her death under the title of *Stories and Essays* (Free Spirit Press, Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, 1924). Dr. Goldberg devoted a supplementary chapter to 'The Writings of Mrs. Havelock Ellis.'

one who helped to shelter Havelock Ellis from an interrupting world.

Yet Ellis is more a product of places than of persons, and after Australia, Cornwall has meant most to him. Since 1891 he has spent there some fifteen years. A country of clean earth, austere granite and iridescent mists, he thinks of it as his heaven, that beneficent Eternity to which he can escape from the dirt and fog of swirling London in November. Most of us are more or less indifferent to our physical environment and are fairly content as long as our work and our associates are fairly congenial. 'I do not share that attitude,' says Ellis; 'on the contrary, I would be more inclined to say that climate is the only thing worth "bothering" about. At all events I would certainly regard it, together with love and philosophy, as one of the things most necessary to the soul, as distinct from the body. For it is a joy of the soul that I experience here, transcending whatever may always remain alien to me and aloof in this land of Cornwall.' [1] On the extreme southern arm of England, that Land's End which W. H. Hudson has described so glowingly, Ellis was free from people, noise, hurry. He could wander for hours, undisturbed, along the broken seaboard. Through the clear mild winter, he could usually write out of doors. In November, 1920, he returned to Cornwall after a few years' absence, following his wife's death, but went to a new part, near Padstow, on the upper coast. 'While this region has its own traits, it is still, as I know in my nerves and see with my eyes, the Cornwall with which the greater part of my life has been inextricably blended. As I recline on the untouched sands and the waves creep up toward my feet, influences come out of the past to wrap me round and round. I am within the

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 190.

circle of a sacred halo iridescently woven of sadness and joy, of tenderness and peace.' [1]

In contrast to Cornwall, Ellis's other European paradise is Spain, where he went, with Arthur Symons, for the first time in the spring before his marriage. Passing through Roussillon, they stopped to rest for the night, 'before crossing the frontier, at the little city of Perpignan, once Spanish, and with an agreeable Catalan flavour still clinging to it.' At dusk Ellis pushed open the door of the quiet and unostentatious cathedral, to find 'a broad and aisleless hall, of solemn and mysterious simplicity, with that low-toned gravity and sweetness which strikes the perfect note of devotion in a church and veils its imperfection, if such there be, in tender mist.' [2] This was his unforgettable introduction to the beauty and originality of Catalonian architecture, which he had previously known nothing of. Thence down to the gay and vital city of Barcelona and across parts of Castile and Aragon, Ellis and Symons began to understand the fascinating qualities of a primitive people. It was a brief pilgrimage, but long enough to win Ellis's heart (as well as Symons's) and bring him back on six more journeys in later years.[3] On returning to England he carried with him a little volume of *Cantares Populares* which seemed to embody the soul of Spain.

Early in 1892 appeared Ellis's third book, *The Nationalisation of Health*, in which he outlined simply the chief weapons of public hygiene, which were still left largely to charity and individual initiative. 'Beyond a very limited but somewhat varied experience,' he said in the preface, 'I have no special knowledge of these

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 28. [2] *The Soul of Spain*, 283.

[3] The other journeys were made in 1891 and 1895, spring; three months at Malaga at the beginning of 1899; 1901, 1906, 1911, 1913, spring.

matters. I do not really see why I should write about them more than any other person. They concern every one and I have my own work to do. But in the face of the apathy and the ignorance that exist among us today, it seems to be the duty of any one who has an opportunity of realising the evils around us, to point out the paths of safety.' The individualism of Ellis is so broad at times, his sympathy with Nietzschean egoism so pronounced, that his intense social conscience is easily overlooked. The trait is well indicated by those two early volumes, *The Criminal* and *The Nationalisation of Health*, both of which he wrote because no one else would.

A much more congenial task at this time was the completion of *Man and Woman*, a study of human secondary sexual characters, which was published in 1894. He had begun some twelve years before (at St. Thomas's) 'to collect definite data concerning the constitutional differences between men and women,' moved to do this because he realized that such differences lay at the root of many social questions in which he took great interest, and he 'knew of no full and unprejudiced statement of the precise facts.' In the preface to the fourth edition (1904) he explained further that *Man and Woman* was 'intended as an introduction to a more elaborate study of the primary phenomena of sex on the psychological side. As such the book was undertaken for my own help and instruction, more than for that of others, simply as a necessary piece of pioneering work at the approach to a difficult and confused field.' It was at once recognized as an authoritative statement and has ever since been widely used by scholars and laymen alike. Iwan Bloch, the noted German sexologist, called it 'a classical work' which 'forms the foundation for all later researches' in that

field, and according to F. H. Marshall, the English specialist in the physiology of reproduction, it 'contains a fund of valuable information.' Ellis's carefully-substantiated conclusion (confirming Darwin's findings) that there is a wider variational tendency in men than in women has been generally accepted, but it has also been seriously questioned by some on theoretical grounds, and by others who interpret it as a slur on woman's possibilities. The only public controversy of Ellis's career was with Karl Pearson, the distinguished biometrician, over this problem. In 1897 Pearson published an essay (in *The Chances of Death*) designed to lay the axe to 'a pseudo-scientific superstition' which he charged Ellis with furthering, but fell himself into a series of medical errors and logical fallacies in spite of an air of certitude. In replying some years later,[1] Ellis exhibited a neat polemical gift which exercise might have raised to caustic heights. 'Personally,' he said, 'I object to controversy. I have always made it a rule not to take part in it, and to ignore all attacks, devoting my energies to making my work as sound as I can. Hitherto I have adhered to that rule. But there are times when it may be well to break even a good rule.' He then commented on the misleading precision which the mathematician is apt to achieve, when lost in the complexities of biological phenomena. Pearson had arbitrarily selected size as the only safe criterion of variability, although Ellis had already objected to it because of the unequal effect of the pelvis at birth on male and female children. 'Professor Pearson's earlier excursions into the biological field were chiefly concerned with crabs; in passing from crabs to human beings he failed to allow for the fact that human beings

[1] 'Karl Pearson on Variation in Man and Woman,' *Popular Science Monthly*, Jan., 1903; reprinted as appendix of *Man and Woman*.

do not come into the world under the same conditions.' With reference to the general use of 'biometrical' methods, Ellis concluded: 'I am not competent to judge of the mathematical validity of such methods, but so far as I am able to follow them I gladly recognise that they constitute a very valuable instrument for biological progress. I say nothing against the instrument: I merely point out that, on this occasion, the results obtained by its application have been wrongly interpreted.'

In the latest edition (1926) of *Man and Woman*, Ellis dwelt in the preface on the various misinterpretations of his conclusion about variability, but then summed up the implications of his original position: 'The sexes are perfectly poised; men and women are at every point different and at all points equivalent. There is no reason why men should be anxious to do everything that women do, or women be anxious to do everything that men do; but there is likewise no reason why each sex should not be absolutely free to develop the possibilities with its own proper nature, even when the development is along exceptional lines.' [1]

In 1894 the International Medical Congress, meeting at Rome, recognized for the first time the subject of criminal anthropology, including it in the psychiatry section. Ellis was invited by Lombroso to share the secretarial duties, which were entirely honorary. As might have been expected, the meetings themselves did not prove valuable to him, but he revelled in the city of his Australian dreams. Travelling about Italy, he saw on Easter Day in Milan the ballet at la Scala and the church that St. Ambrose built on the site of an

[1] The question of variability in men and women is not yet settled, and the position represented by Ellis is suspected by some students of intelligence tests. The answer to the question depends on the functions measured.

ancient temple of Bacchus. That evening he set down in his notebook a characteristic impression: 'The iron crown is gone and his (Ambrose's) Milan is now known to Europe as the central home of dancing for this planet. Very exquisite dancing it is — the most delicious music and poetry of motion. St. Ambrose is now only a half-forgotten dream. But at la Scala they dance still as perfectly as they could have danced in that temple that Ambrose destroyed and they send out missionaries with twinkly feet poised in the air, to every part of the civilised world. Poor St. Ambrose. And even the Duomo, where his own worship of another world is still carried on — what is it on the whole but a monument of bad attitudinising, an ineffectual la Scala? Bacchus, St. Ambrose, the Duomo and la Scala — the circle is complete and so the world runs evenly on its way.'

CHAPTER X

SODOM AND GOMORRAH

Of Ellis's *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, the first volume published was *Sexual Inversion*, which became involved in a scandalous prosecution. By a peculiar turn of events he had thrust upon him an anomalous subject in which he was never primarily interested and suffered in consequence from much baseless misrepresentation.

Erotic attraction between individuals of the same sex is so mysterious or repulsive to most people that they prefer not to consider it, and the good 'Nordic' would like to believe that it has only been found in ancient Greece, the Orient and southern Europe. As a matter of fact, homosexuality can be limited to no race, period or stage of culture, and it is probably more common to-day in Germany, England and the United States than in France or Italy. Dr. Joseph Collins asserts that God, in his infinite wisdom, has created three homosexuals out of every hundred people, whereas Magnus Hirschfeld, the acknowledged authority, who has no data from the Deity, believes that one and a half per cent of all human beings are inverted. The number is vast in any case and demands our candid attention, especially as the problem can no longer be solved by such convenient terms as 'degeneration,' 'hereditary taint,' 'disease,' or 'insanity.' Homosexuals do not fall below the general average of physical and mental health, and they frequently possess the very highest human qualities.

> Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord of Heaven.

This verse from the Book of Genesis concentrates and may seem to justify the intense horror of many centuries. The ancient tribes of Judah and Israel began the fierce war against homosexuality. Struggling to survive in a hostile country, they were commanded by their wise Jehovah to multiply prolifically, and punish ruthlessly those parasites who betrayed the religion of procreation by imitating the 'unnatural' vices of their idolatrous neighbors. This abhorrence passed into the canon of official Christianity, and to-day society is sprinkled with a minority of thousands who combine the emotions of the hunted criminal and the persecuted martyr. People of the unpardonable secret, they pursue fearfully their double roads which meet only at the tomb. Many of them feel that they are of a superior race, combining the virtues of both sexes in a higher harmony. They claim for their brotherhood most of the geniuses of mankind and argue that every period of efflorescence depends on the spread of homosexuality. As devotees of noble friendship they call themselves 'Uranians,' in reference to the Greek word for heaven. They turn to classic Athens for their social ideal and cite Plato's *Symposium* as scripture.

> The offspring of the Heavenly Aphrodite is derived from a mother in whose birth the female has no part — she is from the male only; this is that love which is of youths, and the goddess being older, there is nothing of wantonness in her.

These extreme attitudes of degradation or exaltation becloud the patent fact that homosexuality is the most important of all the perversions, as Ellis says, because of its prevalence and because of the high quality of many of its subjects. In the epic novel of Proust it is treated with tragic grandeur and André Gide in *Corydon* has written an eloquent defence. It is touched on

often by D. H. Lawrence in his novels and is the theme of Bourdet's courageous play, *The Captive*, which recently caused such a storm of interest in Paris and New York. Such literary presentations and the endless investigations of psychoanalysis have forced the topic of homosexuality on a more or less unwilling world. And that is well, for whether a congenital, organic condition, or an acquired mental trait, it is not a superficial idiosyncrasy that will pass quietly away.

The more serious study of homosexuality began nearly seventy years ago in Germany, with the able, apologetic essays of Ulrich, followed by the more scientific work of Westphal. Then came the long domination of Krafft-Ebing, which was broken by Moll, Hirschfeld and the Freudians. Meanwhile, the pioneer work in English, *A Problem in Greek Ethics*, was privately brought out in 1883 by John Addington Symonds.

As a boy Symonds had been moved to tears by Homer's shining pictures of young manhood. 'The disguised Hermes in his prime and bloom of beauty, unlocked some deeper fountains of eternal longing in my soul.' Through endless reveries he communed with the radiant Apollo. He would 'pore for hours together over the divine loveliness of the Praxitelean Cupid, while his annoyed father wondered why he did not choose some other statue, a nymph or Hebe.' The same enjoyment he found in Shakespeare's Adonis, Marlowe's Leander and the youths of Plato. 'I was certainly a rather singular boy. But I suppose, if others wrote down the history of their mental growth with the same frankness and patience, I should not stand alone.' [1] His great biography of Michelangelo was the fruit of a lifelong devotion to the artist who worshipped at the shrine of young men's beauty.

[1] Horatio F. Brown: *John Addington Symonds: A Biography*, 36.

At twenty-four, Symonds, broken permanently in health, tortured by doubt, found the deepest consolation of his life in the robust poetry of Walt Whitman. The poet's sanguine attitude, his cosmic enthusiasm, dispersed the clouds of too much thought, and the praise of comrades, the doctrine of 'adhesiveness,' especially in *Calamus*, seemed to confirm Symonds's natural inclination. In 1871 he began a long series of letters to Whitman, touching again and again on the subject of 'passional relationships between men,' and asking for the definite meaning of *Calamus*. Through twenty years Whitman veered nervously away from the question or gave vaguely negative answers, but finally denied that there was any connection at all between homosexuality and his faith in friendship. During the preparation of his splendid *Studies of Greek Poets* in 1873, Symonds wrote *A Problem in Greek Ethics, Being an Inquiry into the Phenomenon of Sexual Inversion*, of which ten copies were printed ten years later, and in 1891 *A Problem of Modern Ethics*, with the same sub-title, also appeared privately.

This side of Symonds was hardly touched on by his official biographer, Horatio F. Brown, who made no reference to the essays on inversion. Van Wyck Brookes solves the issue by confining it to the 'mysterious depths of æsthetic psychology.' It seems only reasonable to say that Symonds had homosexual leanings, which he found nobly justified in Greek literature and Whitman's poetry, which he expressed in athletic comradery in Switzerland and Venice, and which he considered philosophically a possible way of escape from the melancholy modern confusion. Before dying, a victim of tuberculosis, he wished to put his many years' reflections on the question into a weighty scientific study. Inadequately equipped for such a task and

living on the edge of the abyss, he was obliged to find a collaborator. Since Ellis wrote him in 1886 about the general introduction for the Mermaid Series they had been in correspondence. He was also much impressed by *The New Spirit* and knew that Ellis was editor of the Contemporary Scientific Series. So early in 1893 he wrote to Ellis, proposing that they collaborate in a book on sexual inversion — 'I am almost certain that this matter will attract a great deal of attention; and that it is a field in which pioneers may do excellent service for humanity.'

Ellis had been collecting material for years on the whole subject of sex, but up to the time of his marriage he had made no plans for immediate publication. It was not his disposition to hurry matters and the preliminary volume, *Man and Woman*, still lay ahead. Working alone in a scorned realm, he was naturally gratified by the approach of Symonds, who was a much older man with a wide reputation and already the author of two competent monographs on the topic proposed. Ellis had always intended to publish first a study of the more normal manifestations of the sexual impulse before discussing the abnormal manifestations, but he persuaded himself that by working with Symonds he would have time to develop the central part of his subject more thoroughly.

'I had not at first proposed to devote a whole volume to sexual inversion. It may even be that I was inclined to slur it over as an unpleasant subject, and one that it was not wise to enlarge on. But I found in time that several persons for whom I felt respect and admiration were the congenital subjects of this abnormality. At the same time I realized that in England, more than in any other country, the law and public opinion combine to place a heavy penal burden and a

severe social stigma on the manifestations of an instinct which to these persons who possess it frequently appears natural and normal. It was clear that the matter was in special need of elucidation and discussion. So that when Mr. Symonds, who had long studied this subject, proposed — while still unaware that I was working at the psychology of sex — that we should collaborate in a book on sexual inversion, I willingly entered into correspondence with him regarding the scope and general tendency of the suggested book and ultimately agreed to the proposal. I drew up a plan of the book, assigning certain chapters to each author, and Mr. Symonds accepted the plan without modification. He had already privately printed two pamphlets dealing with inversion, *A Problem in Greek Ethics* and *A Problem in Modern Ethics*. It was arranged that the former, with certain enlargements suggested by me, such as a section dealing with inversion in women among the Greeks, should form one chapter of the book, and that some portion of the second pamphlet should be used in various chapters. Mr. Symonds also proposed that the authors' names should be placed on the title-page as they now appear. Then he set to work on his section of the book as planned. A few months later he was dead.' [1]

Symonds died on the 19th of April, 1893. A year later *The Medico-Legal Journal* contained an article on 'The Study of Sexual Inversion,' by Havelock Ellis, the first of several on the same subject which appeared in various special periodicals. In January, 1895, Edward Carpenter distributed a small edition of his pamphlet, *Homogenic Love*, which was probably

[1] Preface, *Sexual Inversion*, by Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds; German edition, 1896; English edition, printed, 1897, never published.

the first attempt in England 'to deal at all publicly with the problems of the Intermediate Sex.'[1] It caused a good deal of agitation and might have reached a wide audience, had not Oscar Wilde been arrested a few months later. The notorious trial at once put an end to the wicked gestures of the nineties, as well as to any serious open discussion of sexual problems, especially those of homosexuality. In the spirit of the panic, Fisher Unwin broke his agreement with Carpenter to bring out *Love's Coming of Age* (although it was not to contain the pamphlet on 'homogenic love'), and refused to go on handling *Towards Democracy*. Ellis tried unsuccessfully to place *Sexual Inversion* with two or three reputable publishers, and meanwhile arranged for a German translation by his friend Hans Kurella, who had already translated *The Criminal* and *Man and Woman*. It was consequently published at Leipzig, at the end of 1896, under the title of *Das Konträre Geschlechtsgefühl*, in the *Bibliothek für Socialwissenschaft*, and at once met with general approval as a highly important contribution to psychology.[2]

In the preface Ellis explained that the book was somewhat more shapeless than it was planned, owing to the sudden death of Symonds, and that his part in it, 'which would otherwise have been fitted into the body of the book, mostly appeared as fragmentary appendices. His share, as the book now stands, is made up

[1] Edward Carpenter: *My Days and Dreams*, 195.

[2] Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld writes to me in English under the date of March 15, 1927:

'The book *Sexual Inversion* by Ellis and Symonds was very important for the homosexual question in Germany. The spirit in this book was so noble and scientific that we have preferred it to Moll's *Conträre Sexualempfindung*. Since this time the name of Havelock Ellis was very popular in Germany. The late Iwan Bloch was a very diligent author but not so deep as Havelock Ellis. A sexologist must have brains and heart together. —— had brains (not much), Bloch heart, Ellis both together. On account of this we love him.'

of (1) A Problem in Greek Ethics; this is printed in full; I do not myself consider that it throws any great light on sexual inversion as a congenital psychic abnormality, but from the historical point of view it is not inferior in value and interest to anything published by its author during his lifetime; (2) some portions of A Problem in Modern Ethics; (3) various fragments written to form part of such a book as the present; (4) extracts from letters written to myself in the period of a year or more during which I was considering Mr. Symonds' proposal as to collaboration, was stating my own views, and asking questions as to his; the whole of this discussion was carried on by correspondence, various attempts to effect a personal meeting failing from one cause or another; (5) about half the cases given in this volume were obtained by Mr. Symonds; he had drawn up a very excellent and pointed series of questions, and had obtained numerous reliable histories. I have given no indication as to which are Mr. Symonds' cases and which my own, but, as most of my own cases were obtained in precisely the same way as his, this is of little consequence. With the exception of these cases, which Mr. Symonds placed in my hands in the original forms in which they reached him and which I have to some extent edited, every fragment of the book which belongs to Mr. Symonds is definitely assigned to him; he was in substantial agreement with all the main conclusions; but for everything to which his name is not attached I am solely responsible. Although Mr. Symonds' share in this volume is thus merely fragmentary, it possesses, I believe, a curious and special interest, due to the fact that, unlike his work generally, these fragments are not purely literary, but embody a large amount of scientific inquisition. They go far to justify the insight of Walt Whitman —

who was well acquainted with Mr. Symonds' interest in this subject — of a somewhat unusual estimate of him made in conversation shortly before his own death: "A wonderful man is Addington Symonds — some ways the most indicative and penetrating and significant man of our times. Symonds is a curious fellow. I love him dearly. He is of college breed and education — horribly literary and suspicious, and enjoys things. A great fellow for delving into persons and into the concrete, and even into the physiological, the gastric — and wonderfully acute." . . . Shortly before Mr. Symonds' death he drew up a list of men of British race whom of his own knowledge or from trustworthy information he knew to be inverted. The list contained fifty-two names, many of them honourably known in Church, State, Society, Art and Letters. I could supplement this list by another of sexually inverted women, of whom a considerable portion are widely and honourably known in literature or otherwise, while many of the others are individuals of more than average ability or character.'

By 'sexual inversion' (the term used by French psychologists and adopted by Symonds) Ellis meant 'sexual instinct turned by constitutional abnormality towards persons of the same sex.' He considered it a narrower, more precise term than 'homosexuality' which might refer to any superficial attraction between individuals of the same sex, in the absence of normal stimuli. At the present time 'sexual inversion' and 'homosexuality' are employed interchangeably to cover the same field of phenomena.

The widely divergent views of sexual inversion Ellis traced to the different professions and motives of the investigators. 'It is natural that the police official should find that his cases are largely mere examples of

disgusting vice and crime. It is natural that the asylum superintendent should find that we are chiefly dealing with a form of insanity. It is equally natural that the sexual invert himself should find that he and his inverted friends are not so very unlike ordinary persons. We have to recognise the influence of professional and personal bias and the influence of environment, one investigator basing his conclusions on one class of cases, another on a quite different class of cases. Naturally, I have largely founded my own conclusions on my own cases. I believe, however, that my cases and my attitude toward them justify me in doing this with some confidence. I am not in the position of one who is pleading *pro domo*, nor of the police official, nor even of the physician, for these persons have not come to me for treatment. I approach the matter as a psychologist who has ascertained certain definite facts, and who is founding his conclusions on those facts.' [1] (Before Ellis's first cases were published in 1894 'not a single British case, unconnected with the asylum or the prison, had ever been recorded.')

He felt called upon to stress the congenital element in sexual inversion because there was a growing tendency to neglect it. In reaction against the predominating views of Krafft-Ebing, Moll and others, Schrenck-Notzing was insisting that homosexuality was an acquired perversion which could be successfully treated by suggestion. More recently the psychoanalysts have denounced the organic theory and argued that the homosexual simply remains fixated in a stage of development which is quite natural at a pre-adult level. The psychoanalysts also believe that they have proved their theory by curing many cases of homosexuality. From a different angle the behaviorists at-

[1] *Sexual Inversion*, by H. Ellis and J. A. Symonds, 128–29.

tempt to show that abnormal sex responses are *conditioned* by accidental contacts or forced manipulation in the plastic years. But Ellis has continued to maintain that true homosexuality goes back to inborn physical conditions, to a germinal variation that may be considered abnormal but not morbid or diseased. This view is now held by most investigators, who are able to point out further the connection between glandular processes and sexual activity, in men as well as in rats and roosters.

As long as Ellis has known anything about the subject of inversion he has been extremely sceptical about the methods of 'cure,' although various methods, from castration to psychoanalysis, have been enthusiastically praised. He finds that in the cases of pronounced inverts the cures are unlikely to be either permanent or complete, and that at best 'the cured' are only given a power of reproduction which it is undesirable that they should possess. In 1896 he stated his opinion in a passage which remains unmodified in the third and latest edition of *Sexual Inversion*, published in 1915: 'When I review the cases I have brought forward and the mental history of inverts I have known, I am inclined to say that if we can enable an invert to be healthy, self-restrained and self-respecting, we have often done better than to convert him into the mere feeble simulacrum of a normal man. An appeal to the *paiderastia* of the best Greek days, and the dignity, temperance, even chastity which it involved, will sometimes find a ready response in the emotional, enthusiastic nature of the congenital invert. Plato's Dialogues have frequently been found a source of great help and consolation by inverts. The 'manly love' celebrated by Walt Whitman in *Leaves of Grass*, although it may be of more doubtful value for general

use, furnishes a wholesome and robust ideal to the invert who is insensitive to normal ideals. It is by some such method of self-treatment as this that most of the more highly intelligent men and women whose histories I have already briefly recorded have at last slowly and instinctively reached a condition of relative health and peace, both physical and moral. The method of self-restraint and self-culture, without self-repression, seems to be the most rational method of dealing with sexual inversion when that condition is really organic and deeply rooted. It is better that a man should be able to make the best of his own strong natural instincts, with all their disadvantages, than that he should be unsexed and perverted, crushed into a position which he has no natural aptitude to occupy.[1]

In an article on 'Sexual Problems, Their Nervous and Mental Relations,'[2] Ellis summed up his conception of the 'invert's best ideal' in the following sentence: 'Much the best result seems to be attained for the congenital invert, as modern society is constituted, when, while retaining his own ideals, or inner instincts, he resolves to forego alike the attempt to become nor-

[1] Third edition, 338, *seq.*

Although Stekel, the most able of the practicing psychoanalysts, does not share Ellis's theory of the origin of homosexuality, he is almost equally conservative about its treatment: 'My personal experience has convinced me that here and there psychoanalysis is successful in effecting a cure. But only under certain conditions. The homosexual must be genuinely willing to be cured. He must actively desire a change in his leaning. . . . The will to health is found only in the lighter forms of homosexuality.' 'It is plain that the number of homosexuals will not decrease. On the contrary, I am of the opinion that under certain conditions the extreme polar tensions between man and woman will always drive to homosexuality certain individuals possessing the requisite bisexual disposition and that the number of homosexuals will increase.' William Stekel: *The Homosexual Neurosis*, Eng. trans., 314.

[2] In *The Modern Treatment of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, edited by W. A. White and S. E. Jellife, 1913.

mal and the attempt to secure the grosser gratification of his abnormal desires.'

Thus Ellis takes up that dangerous middle position, which may be correct, but is open to attack from extremists of either side. Never inclined to be reckless in practical suggestions, he cautions the invert against recklessly defying social taboos, as he questions the optimism of physicians and psychologists who believe that genuine inversion can be actually cured.

Yet the typical and invaluable element in Ellis's book on *Sexual Inversion* is not any particular suggestion or discovery, but his general tone, his patient reasonable attitude, which was far more unique thirty years ago than it is to-day. In that book Ellis sounded the clear round note which was to be the key of all his succeeding studies in the field of sex. Homosexuality was an excellent test for his method, as few other subjects of discussion undermine ordinary intellectual sanity more completely. He brought his whole treatise to a close with these words:

'What, then, is the reasonable attitude of society toward the congenital sexual invert? It seems to lie in the avoidance of two extremes. On the one hand, it cannot be expected to tolerate the invert who flouts his perversion in its face, and assumes that, because he would rather take his pleasure with a soldier or a policeman than with their sisters, he is of finer clay than the vulgar herd. On the other, it might well refrain from crushing with undiscerning ignorance beneath a burden of shame the subject of an abnormality which, as we have seen, has not been found incapable of fine uses. Inversion is an aberration from the usual course of nature. But the clash of contending elements which must often mark the history of such a deviation results now and again — by no means infrequently —

in nobler activities than those yielded by the vast majority who are born to consume the fruits of the earth. It bears, for the most part, its penalty in the structure of its own organism. We are bound to protect the helpless members of society against the invert. If we go further, and seek to destroy the invert himself before he has sinned against society, we exceed the warrant of reason, and in so doing we may, perhaps, destroy also those children of the spirit which possess sometimes a greater worth than the children of the flesh.

'Here we may leave this question of sexual inversion. In dealing with it I have sought to avoid that attitude of moral superiority which is so common in the literature of this subject, and have refrained from pointing out how loathsome this phenomenon is, or how hideous that. Such an attitude is as much out of place in scientific investigation as it is in judicial investigation, and may well be left to the amateur. The physician who feels nothing but disgust at the sight of disease is unlikely to bring either succour to his patients or instruction to his pupils.

'That the investigation we have here pursued is not only profitable to us in succouring the social organism and its members, but also in bringing light into the region of sexual psychology, is now, I hope, clear to every reader who has followed me to this point. There are a multitude of social questions which we cannot face squarely and honestly unless we possess such precise knowledge as has here been brought together concerning the part played by the homosexual tendency in human life. Moreover, the study of this perverted tendency stretches beyond itself;

> "O'er that art
> Which you say adds to Nature, is an art
> That Nature makes."

'Pathology is but physiology working under new conditions. The stream of nature still flows into the bent channel of sexual inversion, and still runs according to law. We have not wasted our time in this toilsome excursion. With the knowledge here gained we are the better equipped to enter upon the study of the wider questions of sex.' [1]

The 'art that Nature makes,' in one form or another, is the theme of all Ellis's writings. He quotes often, with profound satisfaction, that short passage from *The Winter's Tale*. It is, for him, almost a creed, the solid kernel of his religion. Like Spinoza and Goethe, he feels that everything is 'perfect after its kind' and has a sure faith in the clear order of Nature. Even when she plays cruel jokes one can have a kind of tragic pleasure.

> 'You see, sweet maid, we marry
> A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
> And make conceive a bark of baser kind
> By bud of nobler race; this is an art
> Which does mend nature, change it rather; but
> The art itself is nature.'

[1] This passage is unchanged in the third edition of *Sexual Inversion*, 355–56.

CHAPTER XI

THE WAYS OF PURITY

In London during the *fin de siècle*, Ellis shared rooms with Arthur Symons at Fountain Court, the most secluded section of The Temple. Fifty yards off Fleet Street, they could sit by the window, listening to the fountain, and imagine they were in Granada. Close by was the Embankment where they walked between Charing Cross and Blackfriars, 'never weary of contemplating that lovely and slowly shifting scene as the magic fairyland of twilight passed into the deeper beauty of night.' [1] And not far away were the music-halls where they went so often in search of fine dancing. When Ellis was out of London, as always in winter, his two rooms were occupied from time to time by various friends of Symons, such as Verlaine, Dowson, Beardsley and Yeats. At the age of thirty Symons was one of the brilliant forces of the younger generation and it was to him that the publisher, Leonard Smithers, offered the editorship of a new magazine which would carry on more loyally the original tradition of the declining *Yellow Book*. Symons accepted on the condition that Aubrey Beardsley would be made art editor. That was a bold request, as Beardsley had been dismissed from the staff of the *Yellow Book* only six months before, at the time of the Wilde trial, under pressure brought by Sir William Watson and Mrs. Humphry Ward, who insisted that the illustrator of *Salome* must be as wicked as the author. (As a matter of fact Beardsley was neither a friend of Wilde's nor an invert.) However, Symons won his point and *The*

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 122.

Savoy was born. It began as a quarterly in January, 1896, became a monthly and ceased with the eighth number in December, to be remembered as the finest literary periodical and the swan-song of the 1890's in England.

Among the contributors to *The Savoy* were Max Beerbohm, Ernest Dowson, Richard Le Gallienne, Lionel Johnson, Bernard Shaw, Beardsley with *Under the Hill* as well as drawings, and Symons, who wrote far more than any one else, including the whole of the last issue. Ellis contributed to six of the eight numbers, four of his most elaborate essays. Yet, in spite of his relation to Symons and *The Savoy*, he is not ordinarily considered a member of 'the Beardsley period.' That period, according to Osbert Burdett, was largely the product of French influences and began in 1886 with George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man*, which dealt in keen, self-conscious fashion with recent French literature and 'the roses and raptures of vice.' As Ellis had long since been absorbed in the study of sex, and familiar with the most robust of French writers, he could not emulate Moore's enthusiasms or occupy himself seriously with the æsthetic cultivation of sin, and though he wrote of the *new* spirit it had nothing whatever to do with 'the new voluptuousness.' No more could he participate in the cult of the artificial or become contemptuous of Nature, as he possessed that balancing scientific attitude which nearly all of his artistic contemporaries lacked. At the same time he was not scornful of their rebellion against 'the healthy school' of writers in a smug, circumscribing world, and he wrote a beautifully sympathetic study of Huysmans, the high priest of 'decadence' in art.[1] 'We may

[1] *Affirmations*, 158–211; cf. Arthur Symons: 'The Decadent Movement in Literature,' in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Nov., 1893.

well reserve our finest admiration for the classic in art, for therein are included the largest and most imposing works of human skill; but our admiration is of little worth if it is founded on incapacity to appreciate the decadent. Each has its virtues, each is equally right and necessary.'

For the first number of *The Savoy* Ellis wrote an article on Zola, who was then a much embattled figure. Two winters previously, in order to add to his extremely limited income, he had translated *Germinal* for a privately printed edition, arranged by Texeira de Mattos, which contained the only unexpurgated works of Zola in English. He dictated the entire work to Mrs. Ellis, on the understanding that they should share the proceeds, at Cornwall in the evenings of the early months of 1894, producing an English version [1] of the epic of fertility and labor which is more powerful, in some respects, than the original French. Ellis was convinced that Zola had proved himself a great master of his art in *Germinal* and *L'Assommoir* at least, although he often failed in moulding his masses of material. 'Such works are related to the ordinary novel much as Wagner's music-dramas are related to the ordinary Italian opera.' Zola's importance lay in the very qualities for which he was excoriated; — his honest treatment of the sexual and digestive functions in elemental language springing from the speech of the common people. 'In spite of all his blunders, Zola has given the novel new power and directness, a vigour of fibre which was hard indeed to attain, but which, once attained, we may chasten as we will.'

More passionately, less crudely, Nietzsche did for

[1] It was republished in 1925 by Alfred A. Knopf; Ellis received for a two-and-a-half page introduction the same amount that he was originally paid for the entire translation.

moral philosophy what Zola did for fiction. He swept it out of the tubercular atmosphere of the academy and gave it a healthy airing. He introduced beauty and vigor into the most sterile field of human speculation. Our writers on ethics may continue to exemplify what Nietzsche called 'immaculate perception,' but that no longer assures them reverence. With natural discretion the English-reading world avoided this dangerous demon as long as possible and, through ignorance, was unable to rejoice when he entered the dark chamber in 1889. The first comprehensive essay on Nietzsche was that by Ellis published in *The Savoy*. He regretted not writing it some years earlier, as he had been greatly impressed by *Thoughts Out of Season* during his hospital days. That work of Nietzsche's first period, containing 'Schopenhauer as Educator' and 'The Use and Abuse of History,' was perhaps his most sober, rounded achievement, but it has always been neglected for his gorgeous confusions. Ellis saw Nietzsche as 'the modern incarnation of that image of intellectual pride which Marlowe created in Faust.' A sound individualism to begin with, a superb feeling for French culture, the Spartan principle of the dance applied to thought and action — in all this the quiet Englishman could be at one with his great German predecessor. 'Our suppleness and skill must be exercised alone on the things that are vital, essential, primitive; the rest may be thrown aside.' But it was not in Ellis's nature to accept that other part of the Nietzschean gospel, the enthusiasm for hardness, the contempt for pity, the indifference to fading and faded things. In aspiring to the superman we need not throw off our humanity. If Ellis has reached the region beyond good and evil, it was not through hardness but through tenderness all-too-human.

Some ten years ago Ellis made his final pronouncement on Nietzsche in a scholarly article contributed to Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. It concluded as follows: 'He cannot be ranged alongside the world's greatest spirits; we cannot place him by his master (so far as he may be said to have a master), Goethe. The searchlight of his genius could shed its penetrating beam on a great number of spots, but we miss the all-embracing light which reveals the gracious harmony of the whole. Nietzsche's proposed solutions of definite problems are scarcely sufficiently precise or sufficiently sound to command general assent; and it seems unlikely that he will occupy a permanently important place in the history of philosophy. We may better place him in that procession of distinguished figures in the world's spiritual history — artists and moralists, sometimes mystics or prophets, which includes Marcus Aurelius, William Blake, Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman. However transitory his influence may prove as a philosopher, his place as an artist is assured, for he carried the German language to a new stage of perfection; "one day it will be said," he wrote at the end, "that Heine and I were the supreme artists of the German language," and the claim is scarcely now disputed. His work, moreover, will always be interesting for its singular gleams of insight and for the passionate vitality with which it presents the struggles and progress and fate of a human soul of the acutest sensibility and the rarest endowment.'

In 1895 *Jude the Obscure* was greeted by the outraged mud-slinging public, which had violently abused Ibsen's *Ghosts* a few years earlier, and Hardy stopped writing novels for his fastidious countrymen. While the tumult was still on, *The Savoy* published Ellis's

incisive discourse *Concerning Jude the Obscure*, which is altogether one of his most characteristic achievements, but little known because it has never been reprinted. Always suspicious of popularity, he had become somewhat indifferent to Hardy and was definitely repelled by the sub-title of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles; a pure woman faithfully presented.* 'It so happens that I have always regarded the conception of "purity," when used in moral discussion, as a conception sadly in need of analysis, and almost the first time I ever saw myself in print was as the author of a discussion, carried on with the usual ethical fervour of youth, of the question: "What is Purity?" I have often seen occasion to ask the question since. It seems to me doubtful whether anyone is entitled to use the word "pure" without first defining precisely what he means, and still more doubtful whether an artist is called upon to define it at all, even in several hundred pages. I can quite conceive that the artist should take pleasure in the fact that his own creative revelation of life poured contempt on many old prejudices. But such an effect is neither powerful nor legitimate unless it is engrained in the texture of the narrative; it cannot be stuck on by a label. To me that glaring sub-title meant nothing, and I could not see what it should mean to Mr. Hardy. It seemed an indication that he was inclined to follow after George Eliot, who, for a large "consideration," condescended to teach morality to the British public, selling her great abilities for a position of fame which has since become somewhat insecure; because, although English men and women are never so happy as when absorbing unorthodox sermons under the guise of art, the permanent vitality of sermons is considerably less than art.'

These doubts in Ellis's mind were at once quieted

by *Jude the Obscure* which he considered 'in all the great qualities of literature the greatest novel published in England for many years,' despite one or two crude lapses in artistic taste. As for its being an immoral book, any piercing vision of human relationships is at first subject to such charges, with the prospect of becoming an expurgated classic. It is not for the artist to ignore or solve moral issues, but to employ them as his raw material, disclosing the conflict of law and passion, 'drawing the sinuous woof of human nature between the rigid warp of morals. Take away morals, and the novelist is left *in vacuo*, in the region of fairy land. The more subtly and firmly he can weave these elements together the more impressive becomes the stuff of his art. The great poet may be in love with passion, but it is by heightening and strengthening the dignity of traditional moral law that he gives passion fullest play.' Or, as Hardy has said, 'The crash of broken commandments is as necessary an accompaniment to the catastrophe of a tragedy as the noise of drum and cymbals to a triumphal march.'

The traditional English novelist, having followed his hero and heroine to the ceremony which makes copulation legitimate, left them to a long period of reproductive peace, as if the theme of sex had been quite played out. But in *Jude the Obscure* Hardy abandoned this 'farmyard view' of morality and distinguished actual matrimony from the simple formula. The thought that such a work might fall into the hands of the Young Person did not frighten Ellis, who has always had profound faith in the instincts of youth. 'One can understand that a work of art as art may not be altogether intelligible to the youthful mind, but if we are to regard it as an example or a warning, surely it is only for youth that it can have any sort of saving

grace. "Jude" is an artistic picture of a dilemma such as the Young Person, in some form or another, may one day have to face. Surely, on moral grounds, she should understand and realize this beforehand. A book which pictures such things with fine perception and sympathy should be singularly fit reading.' In 1896 Ellis said, and he still believes, that 'every attempt to restrict literature is open to a *reductio ad absurdum*.' 'There are always the compositors.'

From Zola to Nietzsche to *Jude the Obscure*, Ellis's writing for *The Savoy* grew steadily more brilliant in form and more daring in substance, culminating in the superb essay on Casanova, which 'stands alone,' said Arthur Symons some years later, 'at all events in England, as an attempt to take Casanova seriously, to show him in relation to his time and in relation to human problems.' [1] Hitherto it had been the fate of the adventurous Venetian to be enjoyed surreptitiously and to be denounced publicly as an erotic reprobate not worth reading. And so Ellis began: 'There are few more delightful books in the world than Casanova's *Mémoires*. — That is a statement I have long vainly sought to see in print.'

The *Mémoires* present, first of all, 'the supreme type of the human animal in the completest development of his rankness and cunning, in the very plenitude of his most excellent wits,' a magnificent rogue in a magnificent century. 'The self-reliant man, immensely apt for enjoyment, who plants himself solidly with his single keen wit before the mighty oyster of the world, has never revealed himself so clearly before.' Such a career may not be in perfect accord with the Ten Commandments, but it has, at least, the primary virtue

[1] Arthur Symons: 'Casanova at Dux: An Unpublished Chapter of History,' *North American Review*, Sept., 1902.

of vitality, which is not exhibited by spiritual eunuchs. He was vain, sensual, dishonest; he was also bold, brilliant and frank with himself. He touched life at many sides, it must be remembered, although *l'amour* was his particular profession. 'A man of finer moral fibre,' said Ellis, 'could scarcely have loved so many women; a man of coarser fibre could never have left so many women happy.'

Do these qualities in Casanova recommend him for general circulation? (The English versions of the *Mémoires* are still so truncated or expensive that the question is as pertinent to-day as it was thirty years ago.) What is the moral significance of such books? Ellis himself puts the question, knowing so well that it is rarely answered. 'When we find it assumed that there are things good to do and not good to justify we may strongly suspect that we have come across a mental muddle.' As children need fairy tales and youth thrives on adventure stories, says Ellis, the adult also is entitled to relief from the dull patterns of convention. The bow cannot always be bent, nor the human soul continually strained to a solemn tension. Energies, which are not destructible while life exists, are apt to explode at one point when they cannot act at another. The principles of the 'new psychology' were assumed by our unscientific ancestors for many hundreds of years before the beginning of modern civilization. In the various forms of the orgy they gave religious sanction to the periodic letting-off of steam.

The Feast of Fools, which was not suppressed until the sixteenth century, was once defended, in a petition to the Theological Faculty of Paris, as follows: 'We do this according to ancient custom, in order that folly, which is second nature to man and seems to be inborn,

may at least once a year have free outlet. Wine casks would be burst if we failed sometimes to remove the bung and let in air. Now we are all ill-bound casks and barrels which would let out the wine of wisdom if by constant devotion and fear of God we allowed it to ferment. We must let in air so that it may not be spoilt. Thus on some days we give ourselves up to sport, so that with the greater zeal we may afterwards return to the worship of God.'[1]

'We have lost the orgy,' says Ellis, 'but in its place we have art.' The complications and prohibitions of civilization do not permit the concrete fulfilment of many random and primitive impulses, but there is still accessible a region of 'emotional athletics' which is far more satisfying than the jungle of absolute repression. 'The adventures of fairy-land — of which for our age I take Casanova's *Mémoires* as the type — constitute an important part of this athletics. It may be abused, just as we have the grosser excesses of the runner and the cyclist; but it is the abuse and not the use which is pernicious, and under the artificial conditions of civilisation the contemplation of the life and adventures of the heroically natural man is an exercise with fine spiritual uses. Such literature thus has a moral value: it helps us to live peacefully within the highly specialised routine of civilisation.' Yet Ellis hastens to add that one need not be conscious of that moral value, and he who does not win some pure enjoyment from the *Mémoires* must be corrupt at heart.[2]

[1] Havelock Ellis: *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, VI, 319, quoted from Flogel's *Geschichte des Grotesk-Komischen*, 4th edition, 204.

[2] In thus anticipating the more recent doctrine of 'sublimation,' Ellis was also echoing in part Charles Lamb's charming defence of Restoration drama: 'I confess for myself that (with no great delinquencies to answer for) I am glad for a season to take an airing beyond the diocese of the strict conscience — not to live always in the precincts of the law-courts, but now and then, for a dream-while or so, to imagine a world

Ellis much objects to Casanova being described as 'pornography.' He would point out that 'pornography' should only be used of the writings that are produced for sexual provocation. It is the literary equivalent of prostitution and has to him always been a most tedious and repulsive form of literature. On the other hand, Ellis insists that all great art contains elements of *obscenity*, brief revelations of the obverse or hidden sides of life, which lead to 'a deeper reality and a new beauty.' The difficulty, of course, is that the sight of the obscene blinds the ordinary observer to all the rest of the picture, as the use of the obscene becomes vulgar ugliness in the hands of ordinary artists.[1] As for Casanova's *Mémoires*, they may be superficially considered a series of amorous episodes, but they are also, in Ellis's opinion, the supreme record of the most human of centuries.

All good things must have an end, and *The Savoy* ended abruptly in December, 1896. It was not permitted on the railway bookstalls and the presence of Beardsley on the staff was not excused by the righteous public. *The Savoy* would have probably continued for some years at least to be a magazine of unrivalled quality. And it is quite possible that Ellis would have continued his distinguished series of contributions with essays on Brantôme, or Marivaux, or Petronius, or St. Teresa, or Lombroso, or Galton, or Flaubert, or Goethe! The loss cannot be estimated.

with no meddling restrictions — to get into recesses, whither the hunter cannot follow me —

> . . . Secret shades
> Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
> While yet there was no fear of Jove.

I come back to my cage and my restraint the fresher and more healthy for it. I wear my shackles more contentedly for having respired the breath of an imaginary freedom.'

[1] Cf. *Impressions and Comments*, I, 133–36; *ibid.*, II, 183–85; *ibid.*, III, 197–200.

In the spring of 1897 Ellis was chiefly occupied in revising *Sexual Inversion*, which had been published in German the year before, and in arranging for the English edition, of which more anon. On Good Friday, finding himself entirely alone in his quiet rooms at Fountain Court, he decided that it was a good opportunity to test the vision-producing qualities of the mescal button (*Anhalonium Lewinii*), which was used by the Kiowa Indians of New Mexico for religious purposes. Weir Mitchell in the United States had recently described the effect of the drug, but no one in Europe had yet tried it. Between 2.30 and 4.30 Ellis drank a decoction of three buttons (about ten grammes) and from seven that evening until 3.30 the next morning he dwelt in his own private paradise. Keeping careful notes during the early stages, he wrote: 'Before 7.30, when lying with closed eyes, the visions had become much distincter, but still quite indescribable, mostly a vast field of golden jewels studded with red and green stones and ever changing and full of delight. And moreover all the air round me seemed at one moment to be flushed with vague perfume — producing with the visions a delicious effect. All feelings of discomfort have now quite vanished, except only a slight feeling of faintness showing itself by tremors in hands, etc.' Later uniformly jewelled flowers and gorgeous insects sprang up and covered the field of vision. But, on the whole, the sights were indescribable, constantly approaching and eluding the semblance of known things; they could best be described as 'living arabesques,' with an incomplete tendency to symmetry. He found that he could not influence the production of images nor sustain them voluntarily, but he could to some extent evoke colors. He went to bed at 9.40, but did not settle down to sleep until some hours

later. He arose at breakfast time with a good appetite, and, except for a slight headache, felt rather the better for his experiment. Yet, 'having learned what the experience had to teach, he had no special inclination to renew it.' That attitude was characteristic of Ellis, who, if he had been a really orthodox representative of the yellow nineties, would have adopted the mescal habit for at least a season or two. It was also characteristic of Ellis to recommend mescal above other drugs because it did *not* rob the spectator of his self-possession or bathe him in a sea of emotion. 'The mescal drinker remains calm and collected amid the sensory turmoil around him; his judgment is as clear as in the normal state; he falls into no oriental state of vague and voluptuous reverie.' At Ellis's suggestion two of his friends, a poet (Yeats) and a painter, tried mescal and contributed their experiences to his account which was later published. Recently he has been much interested in Alexandre Rouhier's *Le Peyotl*, an elaborate monograph which treats mescal from every possible angle.[1]

In the summer of 1897 Ellis enjoyed one of his most extensive journeys on the Continent. He started out with Symons in July, bound for the International Medical Congress at Moscow. Passing through Germany they stopped off at Bayreuth to attend an unforgettable performance of *Parsifal*, and thence across Bohemia to Warsaw where Ellis 'saw in the peasant girls more beauty, grace and human tenderness' than he had ever seen in his life. On another page of his notebook he wrote that 'the women of Warsaw are the most attractive in the world, at the same time often

[1] In 'A Note on Mescal Intoxication' (*The Lancet*, June, 1897) Ellis confined himself to the physiological effects; the visions were discussed in 'Mescal, a New Artificial Paradise' (*Contemporary Review*, Jan., 1898) and more elaborately in 'Mescal, a Study of a Divine Plan' (*Popular Science Monthly*, May, 1902).

very ugly; very various, always full of individual character.' The meetings of the Congress at Moscow were much injured by the worst summer heat in thirty-seven years, which was a good excuse for the foreign delegates to give most of their attention to sight-seeing. For Ellis it was an invaluable opportunity to wander about studying the lineaments of a strange people. He was impressed particularly by a scene at the monastery of Troitsa, near Moscow, where pilgrims, mostly women, had gathered from all over Russia for the festival of the Assumption. 'There, at length within the walls of that monastery-fortress on the hill at Sergievo, they fervently kiss the sacred relics, and having been served by the dark-robed, long-haired monks with soup and black bread, they lie down and fall asleep, placid and motionless, on all sides. Young women, grasping the pilgrim's staff, a little droop sometimes in the lips, yet with large brawny thighs beneath the short skirts, stolid great-breasted women of middle age, wrinkled old women decked in their ancient traditional adornments — all this gay-coloured multitude fling themselves down to sleep on the church steps, around its walls, over the silent graves, heaped up anywhere that the march of on-coming pilgrims leaves a little space, tired mænads filled for once with the wine their souls craved, colossal images of immense appeasement. It is the orgy of a strong, silent, much-suffering race, with all the charm of childhood yet upon it, too humane to be ferocious in its energy.'

This scene Ellis inserted into a series of miscellaneous notes which he had started a few years before, after reading Sabatier's beautiful book on St. Francis. All touching on the themes of simplicity and purity, he wove them delicately into a single essay on 'St. Francis and Others,' which, of all his essays, is the one

he himself likes best. And it is certainly the one which expresses most compactly his unique, personal vision.

'It may seem that I speak of out-worn things, and that the problem of saintliness has little relation to the moral problems of our time. It is far otherwise. You have never seen the world if you have not realised that an element of asceticism lies at the foundation of life. You may expel it with the fork of reason or of self-enjoyment, but being part of Nature herself it must ever return. All the art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding in. The man who makes the one or the other his exclusive aim in life will die before he has ever begun to live. The man who has carried one part of the process to excess before turning to the other will indeed learn what life is, and may leave behind him the memory of a pattern saint. But he alone is the wise master of living who from first to last has held the double ideal in true honour. In these, as in other matters, we cannot know the spiritual facts unless we realise the physical facts of life. All life is a building up and a breaking down, a taking in and a giving out, a perpetually anabolic and katabolic rhythm. To live rightly we must imitate both the luxury of Nature and her austerity.' [1]

In reaction against the mechanizing and puritanical forces of contemporary life, there has developed an extravagant emphasis on the direct and violent expression of natural desires, with an indiscriminate appeal to the authority of Blake, Nietzsche and Freud,

[1] *Affirmations*, 220. Most of this passage is also quoted by C. A. Bennett in *A Philosophical Study of Mysticism*, page 48, preceded by the remark: 'Even the simplest act of perception is the resultant of separate acts of attention to the whole and to the parts of the object. In mysticism we see one movement in that adjustment to experience through alternate acts of attention to the many and the one. This idea, which is the essential feature of Hocking's interpretation, has been finely expressed by Havelock Ellis.'

not to mention many minor deities such as Pan and Dionysus. The naïve Dionysian, with his doctrine of release, and the solemn fanatic, with his code of prohibitions, seem equally blind to the essential nature of life, which is a ceaseless process of tension and relaxation. By insisting on this vital equilibrium, this dynamic harmony, without making it a matter of vulgar prudence or categorical imperatives, Ellis becomes one of the most important moralists of his time.

On the side of economy and restraint he puts his emphasis, for the sake of fuller and richer life. Now more than ever he believes that there is a place for a rational asceticism, for 'the luxuries of Epicurean austerity.' So St. Francis took to wife the Lady Poverty not primarily from any masochistic interest in discomfort, but to free himself from superfluous burdens. And in the intervening centuries those burdens have increased a thousand fold. The accumulations of industry, the triumphs of science, have tended in many ways to make our lives increasingly anæmic and vicarious. Our contacts with Nature and with one another become less and less direct. We are lost in secondary goods, in instrumental values. It is this state of affairs which makes men like Thoreau, Whitman, Carpenter and Ellis look with a sceptical eye on the bulk of modern progress, while they speak of the values of simplicity. 'Simplification,' said Carpenter, 'is the first letter of the Alphabet of the Art of Life.' But that letter is not easily learned nor cheaply retained. Simplicity is not simple-mindedness in thought nor insipidity in action, but indifference to inessentials. 'The exquisite things of life are to-day as rare and precious as ever they were.'

In Ellis's analysis, purity, that other virtue of traditional asceticism, also takes on a fuller meaning. As its

symbol is in water, clear and crystalline, its basic condition is physical cleanness, which was long made impossible by the Christian suspicion of the pagan bath, not to mention a naïve faith in the moral value of clothes. With the renaissance of the bath, genuine democracy may yet have a chance, Ellis suggests, for 'there is no social equality between the clean and the dirty.' Perhaps we are also witnessing a new birth of sincerity, the spiritual side of purity, in the efforts of novelists and psychologists, who have defied armies of hypocrisy, to disclose the curtained corners of existence and point out the 'animal passions' which lurk in the chastest soul.

Purity, which is chastity, which is virginity, which is the object of asceticism and the heart of saintliness — that curious equation is being undermined from all sides. Nietzsche was not indulging entirely in rhetoric with the remark that 'Christianity gave poison to Eros; he did not die certainly but degenerated to vice.' For after all, Christianity began as a doctrine of charity and ended largely as an ethics of chastity, while the Roman word *virtus* or manliness evolved into *virtue*, which a woman can lose only once! And so 'the filthy rags of our righteousness have alike robbed desire of its purity and restraint of its beauty.'

This problem Ellis discussed later, at length, in the sixth volume of the sex studies, where he wrote: 'Chastity has for sexual love an importance which it can never lose, least of all to-day. As we liberate ourselves from the bondage of a compulsory physical chastity, it becomes possible to rehabilitate chastity as a virtue. It is not, in St. Theresa's words, the virtue of the tortoise which draws its limbs under its carapace. It is a virtue because it is a discipline in self-control, because it helps to fortify the character and will,

and because it is directly favourable to the cultivation of the most beautiful, exalted, and effective sexual life.'

'The future, it is clear, belongs ultimately to those who are slowly building up sounder traditions into the structure of life. The "problem of sexual abstinence" will more and more sink into insignificance. There remains the great solid fact of love, the great solid fact of chastity. Those are eternal. Between them there is nothing but harmony. The development of one involves the development of the other.'

Shortly before the war the editor of an American magazine wanted something of an advanced sort from Ellis and received an admirable article, 'The Meaning of Purity,' which proved to be 'inappropriate' for the magazine, but was published in 1923 in a volume called *Little Essays of Love and Virtue*. Here is the central thought of the 'inappropriate' chapter: 'The activity of sex is an activity that on the physical side is generated by the complex mechanism of the ductless glands and displayed in the whole organism, physical and psychic, of the individual, who cannot abolish that activity, although to some extent able to regulate the forms in which it is manifested, so that purity cannot be the abolition or even the indefinite suspension of sexual manifestations; it must be the wise and beautiful control of them. It is becoming clear that the old platitudes can no longer be maintained, and that if we wish to improve our morals we must first improve our knowledge.'

Ellis brought the essay on St. Francis to a close with four of his most eloquent paragraphs: 'Why, one asks oneself, is it necessary for me to choose between Paul and Petronius? Why pester me on the one hand with the breastplate of faith and the helmet of salvation, on

the other with the feast of Trimalchio and the kisses of Giton? . . . Our feet cling to the earth, and it is well that we should learn to grip it closely and nakedly. But the earth to us is not all of Nature; there are instincts within us that lead elsewhere, and it is part of the art of living to use naturally all those instincts. In so doing the spiritual burdens which the ages have laid upon us glide away into thin air. And for us, as for him who wrote De Imitatione Christi — however far differently — there are still two wings by which we may raise ourselves above the earth, simplicity, that is to say, and purity.'

To the studies of Zola, Nietzsche, Casanova and Huysmans, Ellis added 'St. Francis and Others,' for a volume entitled *Affirmations*, which was published in December, 1897. In the preface he said that he was discussing morality as revealed or disguised by literature. He frankly treated his subjects only on those sides which suited his own pleasure and selected them because they did that so well. Furthermore, he chose to dwell on those aspects which were most questionable.

'If a subject is not questionable, it seems to me a waste of time to discuss it. The great facts of the world are not questionable; they are there for us to enjoy, or to suffer, in silence, not to talk about. Our best energies should be spent in attacking and settling questionable things that so we may enlarge the sphere of the unquestionable — the sphere of real life — and be ready to meet new questions as they arise. . . . And yet, it may well be, there is a time for affirming the simple eternal facts of life, a time, even, when those simple eternal facts have drifted so far from us that we count them also questionable. The present moment has seemed to me a fitting one to set a few such affirmations in order.

'If I can stimulate any one in the search for his own proper affirmations, he and I may well rest content. He is welcome to cast aside mine as the idle conclusions of a dreamer lying in the sunshine. Our own affirmations are always the best. Let us but be sure that they are our own, that they have grown up slowly and quietly, fed with the strength of our own blood and brain. Only with the help of such affirmations can we find a staff to comfort us through the valley of life. It is only when they utter affirmations, one has said, that the wands of the angels bloom.'

Affirmations was Ellis's most personal book up to that time, and probably he has never equalled it as a rounded artistic achievement. Probably it will take rank among the finest volumes of English essays, distinguished in style and rich in matter. 'I have just been reading your *Affirmations*,' wrote William James to Ellis in December, 1899; 'I think you too indulgent to that monster of meanness, Casanova, but there are splendid pages in your chapter on St. Francis.' The remarkable thing was that Ellis could treat both of those figures with equal candor and equal sympathy. He could discuss Nietzsche, Zola and Huysmans with insight and equanimity, when they were generally misunderstood or ignored in the English-speaking world. He could pursue the themes of simplicity and purity amid decadence, excrement and sin.

CHAPTER XII

HAVELOCK ELLIS ON TRIAL

In 1897 Queen Victoria celebrated her diamond jubilee and Oscar Wilde was released from prison. For two years previously Ellis had sought to have his book on homosexuality brought out in England. None of the medical publishers whom he approached cared to take it up, although two of them admitted that they would have done so with pleasure if they had lived elsewhere. Finally, Ellis's friend, F. H. Perry-Coste, told him of a new publisher, a 'Dr. De Villiers,' who wished to issue a few volumes of genuine scientific interest and had already made a contract with J. M. Robertson. In De Villiers, Ellis found an affable German of serious interests and apparently ample means, well qualified to bring out *Sexual Inversion*, with 'the definite condition that it should not be advertised or sent for review in any but medical or scientific quarters.' Relieved to have the book off his hands, Ellis wrote for it, in July, the general preface to his whole series of *Studies*, which were to occupy him for many more years. As that preface is the chief statement of his life's programme, but is only accessible to 'medical and legal minds,' it is here quoted completely:

'The origin of these *Studies* dates from many years back. As a youth I was faced, as others are, by the problem of sex. Living partly in an Australian city where the ways of life were plainly seen, partly in the solitude of the bush, I was free both to contemplate and to meditate many things. A resolve slowly grew up within me: one main part of my life-work should be to make clear the problems of sex.

'That was more than twenty years ago. Since then I can honestly say that in all that I have done that resolve has never been very far from my thoughts. I have always been slowly working up to this central problem; and in a book published some three years ago — *Man and Woman: a Study of Human Secondary Sexual Characters* — I put forward what was, in my own eyes, an introduction to the study of the primary question of sexual psychology.

'Now that I have at length reached the time for beginning to publish my results, these results scarcely seem to me large. As a youth, I had hoped to settle problems for those who came after; now I am quietly content if I do little more than state them. For even that, I now think, is much; it is at least the half of knowledge. In this particular field the evil of ignorance is magnified by our efforts to suppress that which never can be suppressed, though in the effort of suppression it may become perverted. I have at least tried to find out what are the facts, among normal people as well as among abnormal people; for, while it seems to me that the physician's training is necessary in order to ascertain the facts, the physician for the most part only obtains the abnormal facts, which alone bring little light. I have tried to get at the facts, and, having got at the facts, to look them simply and squarely in the face. If I cannot perhaps turn the lock myself, I bring the key which can alone in the end rightly open the door: the key of sincerity. That is my one panacea: sincerity.

'I know that many of my friends, people on whose side I, too, am to be found, retort with another word: reticence. It is a mistake, they say, to try to uncover these things; leave the sexual instincts alone, to grow up and develop in the shy solitude they love, and they

will be sure to grow up and develop wholesomely. But, as a matter of fact, that is precisely what we can not and will not ever allow them to do. There are very few middle-aged men and women who can clearly recall the facts of their lives and tell you in all honesty that their sexual instincts have developed easily and wholesomely throughout. And it should not be difficult to see why this is so. Let my friends try to transfer their feelings and theories from the reproductive region to, let us say, the nutritive region, the only other which can be compared to it for importance. Suppose that eating and drinking was never spoken of openly, save in veiled or poetic language, and that no one ever ate food publicly, because it was considered immoral and immodest to reveal the mysteries of this natural function. We know what would occur. A considerable proportion of the community, more especially the more youthful members, possessed by an instinctive and legitimate curiosity, would concentrate their thoughts on the subject. They would have so many problems to puzzle over: How often ought I to eat? What ought I to eat? Is it wrong to eat fruit, which I like? Ought I to eat grass, which I don't like? Instinct notwithstanding, we may be quite sure that only a small minority would succeed in eating reasonably and wholesomely. The sexual secrecy of life is even more disastrous than such a nutritive secrecy would be; partly because we expend such a wealth of moral energy in directing or misdirecting it, partly because the sexual impulse normally develops at the same time as the intellectual impulse, not in the early years of life, when wholesome instinctive habits might be formed. And there is always some ignorant and foolish friend who is prepared still further to muddle things. Eat a meal every other day! Eat twelve meals

a day! Never eat fruit! Always eat grass! The advice emphatically given in sexual matters is usually not less absurd than this. When, however, the matter is fully open, the problems of food are not indeed wholly solved, but every one is enabled by the experience of his fellows to reach some sort of situation suited to his own case. And when the rigid secrecy is once swept away a sane and natural reticence becomes for the first time possible.

'The secrecy has not always been maintained. When the Catholic Church was at the summit of its power and influence it fully realized the magnitude of sexual problems and took an active and inquiring interest in all the details of normal and abnormal sexuality. Even to the present time there are certain phenomena of the sexual life which have scarcely been accurately described except in ancient theological treatises. As the type of such treatises I will mention the great tome of Sanchez, *De Matrimonio*. Here you will find the whole sexual life of men and women analyzed in its relationships to sin. Everything is set forth, as clearly and as concisely as it can be — without morbid prudery on the one hand, or morbid sentimentality on the other — in the coldest scientific language; the right course of action is pointed out for all the cases that may occur, and we are told what is lawful, what a venial sin, what a mortal sin. Now I do not consider that sexual matters concern the theologian alone, and I deny altogether that he is competent to deal with them. In his hands, also, undoubtedly, they sometimes become prurient, as they can scarcely fail to become on the non-natural and unwholesome basis of asceticism, and as they with difficulty become in the open air-light of science. But we are bound to recognize the thoroughness with which the Catholic theologians dealt with these mat-

ters, and, from their own point of view, indeed, the entire reasonableness; we are bound to recognize the admirable spirit in which, successfully or not, they sought to approach them. We need to-day the same spirit and temper applied from a different standpoint. These things concern every one; the study of these things concerns the physiologist, the psychologist, the moralist. We want to get into possession of the actual facts, and from the investigation of the facts we want to ascertain what is normal and what is abnormal, from the point of view of physiology and of psychology. We want to know what is naturally lawful under the various sexual chances that may befall man, not as the born child of sin, but as a naturally social animal. What is a venial sin against nature, what a mortal sin against nature? The answers are less easy to reach than the theologians' answers generally were, but we can at least put ourselves in the right attitude; we may succeed in asking that question which is sometimes even more than the half of knowledge.

'It is perhaps a mistake to show so plainly at the outset that I approach what may seem only a psychological question not without moral fervour. But I do not wish any mistake to be made. I regard sex as the central problem of life. And now that the problem of religion has practically been settled, and that the problem of labour has at least been placed on a practical foundation, the question of sex — with the racial questions that rest on it — stands before the coming generations as the chief problem for solution. Sex lies at the root of life, and we can never learn to reverence life until we know how to understand sex. — So, at least, it seems to me.

'Having said so much, I will try to present such results as I have to record in that cold and dry light

through which alone the goal of knowledge may truly be seen.'

Sexual Inversion, by Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds (revised since the German edition), with the above general preface and a special preface chiefly explaining Symonds's part in the book, was duly printed for Dr. De Villiers, using the trade name of "Wilson and Macmillan," and prepared for distribution — when suddenly Horatio Brown, Symonds's literary executor, withdrew permission to publish the Symonds material, although he had given permission for the German edition only the year previously. The reason for Mr. Brown's decision is not known; probably the horror of having his old friend in any way associated with homosexuality was brought home to his mind by the scandal revived with the exit of Wilde from prison. In any case, the Symonds family bought up the entire edition and all but a few copies passed out of existence.

Ellis was now compelled to delete everything written by Symonds as well as any expression of obligation to him in the preface. The former omission was perhaps more of advantage than a disadvantage, as Symonds's historical articles were hardly in place, and the 'histories' which he had supplied were retained. In November, the maltreated volume finally appeared, with Ellis's name alone on the title-page, under the ægis of The University Press, Watford (which contains no university), a name adopted by the astute Dr. De Villiers for a change in luck. It was reviewed highly by English and American specialists and sold quietly for six months. Then something happened.

Among various radical organizations flourishing in London at this time was The Legitimation League, chiefly interested in giving a legal status to so-called

'natural children,' but also in the principle of divorce by mutual consent and other problems of sex relations. The cause was advanced through regular meetings at Holborn Restaurant or St. James's Hall, and a monthly magazine, *The Adult*, published by The University Press of Watford. The founder and president of The Legitimation League was Miss Lillian Harman, of Chicago, whose chief supporter was young George Bedborough, secretary, and editor of *The Adult*. The living-room of his flat, formerly occupied by De Villiers, served as office and book store for the League.

As might have been expected, the Comstocks of Scotland Yard looked on this movement with disfavor and were waiting for an opportunity to break it up. Detectives watched Bedborough's house with the quaint hope of raiding a homosexual orgy. They failed in that, but discovered that an 'immoral' book called *Sexual Inversion* was being sold there. Their suspicion was naturally increased by the fact that the book was not brought out by an established medical publishing house, but by an obscure firm, under a pseudo-academic imprint. (For this reason the editors of *The Lancet* would not allow it to be reviewed in their columns.) On the 27th of May, 1898, a disguised detective bought a copy from Bedborough himself, who was shortly afterward cast into Holloway Jail. Before Sir John Bridge, of the Bow Street Police Court, Bedborough was charged with 'publishing an obscene libel,' which means circulating an indecent work, 'with the intention of corrupting the morals of Her Majesty's subjects.'

As soon as possible Bedborough notified his energetic friend, Henry Seymour, a phonograph inventor with a passion for freedom of speech, who at once began to

organize a Defence Committee and take over the editorship of *The Adult*. After three days' imprisonment Bedborough was released on one thousand pounds bail, which was at first entirely refused. On the 7th of June, Bedborough again appeared before Sir John Bridge, but very little was accomplished. His counsel, Mr. Horace Avory, secured by the committee, declared that he was 'personally prepared to answer for the scientific character of the book,' and Ellis, who was present, announced, through his solicitor, that he was quite prepared to accept all responsibilities of authorship. The whole affair was an unfortunate accident as far as Ellis was concerned, for he had not been previously acquainted with Bedborough, had made no contributions to *The Adult* and had no connection with The Legitimation League. On their side, the League had no particular interest in Ellis, but happened to have for sale some copies of his book because it was published by the firm which handled *The Adult*. On the 13th of June the prosecution was again taken up at Bow Street. A number of 'criminal' passages from Ellis's were read, most of them being bare statements of fact concerning the early lives of inverts. Certain copies of *The Adult* were also alleged to be obscene. And so the case dragged on into the summer.

Meanwhile, the Free Press Defence Committee grew rapidly under the pressure of Seymour, who had the following circular sent all over Great Britain and Ireland.

The Bedborough Prosecution

An attack upon the freedom of the press has been made in the arrest of Mr. George Bedborough, Hon. Sec. of the Legitimation League, for selling a copy of Mr. Havelock Ellis's scientific work on 'The Psychology of Sex.' Realising the serious nature of this prosecution, I have been moved to

call upon all friends of freedom to rally in the defence of those precious rights which have been conquered, at so much cost and sacrifice, by reformers in the past. I am not concerned with the individual views of Mr. Ellis or those of Mr. Bedborough, or of anyone else on the subject of sex. The issue is plain. The book in question deals with sexual inversion and discusses the causes of sexual abnormality from the most disinterested and lofty stand-point. More than this need not be said. Mr. Bedborough has an unquestionable moral right to sell such a book (its price, however, being prohibitive to the general public), and therefore it is the duty of every right-minded person to stand by him at this critical juncture, to the extent of affording him that moral and pecuniary assistance which is so urgently needed to ensure an unprejudiced as well as an adequate legal defence. To this end, a Free Press Defence Committee has been set on foot, to hold a watching brief, as it were, in the interests of the freedom of the press, and the collection of funds for the defence, solely with a view of safeguardng those interests.

It is surmised that the attack upon the book in question is merely an insidious attempt to crush the Legitimation League, the active spirit of which Mr. Bedborough undoubtedly has been. Any subsequent change of tactics by the prosecution (calculated to prejudice the defence) will not affect, I apprehend, the principle involved. The Legitimation League claims the right to discuss the problem of sexual relationships from all points of view, and has no concern whatever with the opinions of the individual members. This is the broad fact, however much the fact may have been distorted.

Among those who have joined the Committee, which is already numerically strong, are Robert Buchanan, Esq., Herbert Burrows, Esq., Walter Crane, Esq., George Bernard Shaw, Esq., J. M. Robertson, Esq., Edward Carpenter, Esq., George Jacob Holyoake, Esq., William Platt, Esq., Oswald Dawson, Esq., Henry Bazett, Esq., Edward Temple, Esq., Miss Edith Lanchester, Thomas Squire Barrett, Esq., Messrs. Jaggard and Co. (publishers), J. B. Askew, Esq., R. Braithwaite, Barrister-at-Law.

Remittances which are urgently needed should be sent at

once to the Honorable Treasurer, Mrs. Gladys Dawson, Bedford Hotel, Covent Garden, W.C., crossed London and Midland Bank, Cornhill, E.C.

HENRY SEYMOUR, *Hon. Sec.*

Among others who joined the committee were Grant Allen, E. Belfort Bax, Frank Harris, H. M. Hyndam, George Moore, F. H. Perry-Coste, Frank Podmore and William Sharp. From distinguished alienists and physicians throughout Europe and the United States, Ellis received numerous letters of sympathy. Dr. Pasquale Penta of the University of Naples wrote:

'DEAR COLLEAGUE, — I cannot delay longer to write to you to protest against a prosecution, which is not only an insult to you, but to truth itself, and to all honest seekers after truth. In other countries, especially in Germany and Italy, such works as yours properly find among magistrates themselves their most numerous readers. These studies are as important as they are new, they reveal to us one of the sides of the physico-psychic human personality, normal and morbid, which it is most necessary for us to know: why should they be less valued in England than elsewhere? By producing Darwin England has shown other nations the path of modern discovery, and has proved that Nature, in her nakedness and in her most hidden functions, must be studied directly and objectively if truth is to be discovered. Having with Darwin overthrown hieratic superstition and scientific prejudices, can England be now afraid of your book, which only opens another page in the unprejudiced, serene, and objective study of Nature?

'Such moral hypocrisy as this does wrong to the land of scientific positivism, a land which is certainly one of the most civilised countries in the world.'

Dr. Hans Kurella, a noted German criminologist and editor of the *Centralblatt für Nervenheilkunde*, sent the following letter to Ellis:

'HONOURED COLLEAGUE, — I read a few days ago in the *Daily Chronicle* that a book with the title of yours had given rise to a public prosecution. I wondered at the identity of the title, but could not imagine that a purely scientific work like yours should be subjected to such treatment.

'For us on the Continent such a proceeding is altogether incomprehensible. What would become of science and of its practical applications if the pathology of the sexual life were put on the Index? It is as if Sir Spencer Wells were to be classed with Jack the Ripper.

No doubt the judge (unless suffering from senile dementia) will accord you brilliant satisfaction. But in any case the whole of scientific psychology and medicine on the Continent is on your side.'

On August 9th, Bedborough's counsel, Horace Avory, made an attempt to have the case removed from the Central Criminal Court to the High Court of Justice, arguing that the book charged as obscene was a technical scientific work entitled to the careful consideration of superior judges and a special jury. The request was flatly denied.

Finally, on the 14th of September, Bedborough was formally indicted by the Grand Jury.

The Indictment

Central Criminal Court to wit. The Jurors for our Sovereign Lady the Queen upon their oath present that George Bedborough, being a person of a wicked and depraved mind and disposition, and unlawfully and wickedly devising, contriv-

ing, and intending, to vitiate and corrupt the morals of the liege subjects of our said Lady the Queen, to debauch and poison the minds of divers of the liege subjects of our said Lady the Queen, and to raise and create in them lustful desires, and to bring the said liege subjects into a state of wickedness, lewdness, and debauchery, on the 27th day of May, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and ninety eight, at a certain shop, to wit Number 16 John Street, Bedford Row, in the County of London, and within the jurisdiction of the said Court, unlawfully, wickedly, maliciously, scandalously, and wilfully did publish, sell and utter, and cause and procure to be published, sold and uttered a certain lewd, wicked, bawdy, scandalous, and obscene libel, in the form of a book entitled 'Studies in the Psychology of Sex: Vol. I. Sexual Inversion, by Havelock Ellis,' in which said book are contained among other things, divers wicked, lewd, impure, scandalous and obscene libels, and matters, which said book is, pursuant to the provisions in that behalf, of the Law of Libel Amendment Act, 1888, deposited with this indictment, together with the particulars showing precisely by reference to pages, columns, and lines, in what part of the said book the alleged libel is to be found. To the manifest corruption of the morals and minds of the liege subjects of our said Lady the Queen, in contempt of our said Lady the Queen, and her laws, in violation of common decency, morality, and good order, and against the peace of our said Lady the Queen, her Crown and Dignity.[1]

With the trial now postponed until the last day of October, there was a lull in the land, the customary peace that is supposed to precede the storm. The issue was clear: a monstrous charge had been made, a great principle was at stake, George Bedborough was the latest of freedom's martyrs!

As the trial drew near, however, Bedborough grew dubious of the price of glory, especially as he was con-

[1] Bedborough was also indicted on ten other counts, no. 2 being for the sale of a lecture, 'The Outcome of Legitimation,' by Oswald Dawson, and the remaining eight counts for different numbers of *The Adult* which he sold and edited.

vinced that the decision would go against him, and there was no telling how heavy his punishment might be. So without consulting his lawyers or the Defence Committee he decided to throw over the matter of principle in order to secure the best possible terms for himself, and went accordingly to Scotland Yard. The authorities there promised him complete immunity on condition that he would plead guilty to the first three charges. At the twelfth hour he instructed his lawyers to carry out this compromise, but they had been engaged by the Defence Committee to defend Bedborough and Ellis's book under the plea of 'not guilty,' and consequently he appeared in court at the last moment without counsel.

The trial took place on the last day of October, 1898, in the famous Central Criminal Court of the Old Bailey. Sir Charles Hall, Recorder of London, formerly attorney-general to the Prince of Wales (the late Edward VII), was on the dais. Ellis, with his wife, was in a rear chamber, ready, if called upon, to vindicate the scientific character of his work. Stranded in the foyer were Bedborough's two lawyers with some dumbfounded members of the Defence Committee. The verbatim report of the trial follows:

Mr. Matthews appeared for the Prosecution.

Mr. Tickel (Clerk of Arraigns): George Bedborough, you are indicted for having unlawfully and wickedly published and sold, and caused to be procured and to be sold a wicked, bawdy, and scandalous, and obscene book called 'The Study of Psychology of Sex.' There are other counts charging you with having published other obscene and scandalous books. Are you guilty or not guilty?

The Defendant: I am guilty on counts 1, 2, and 3.

Mr. Matthews: And as to the rest?

The Defendant: I am not guilty.

Mr. Tickel: May the jury go, my lord?

The Recorder: Yes, if Mr. Matthews accepts that plea. Do you accept that plea, Mr. Matthews?

Mr. Matthews: Yes, my lord; but I shall have something to say with regard to those counts to which he has pleaded.

The Recorder: Those counts are what?

Mr. Matthews: Nos. 1, 2, and 3, my lord. The first relates to a book to which I desire to make no further reference except by (in my own language) adding to the plea of the prisoner that it is an unseemly, suggestive book. So far as count 2 is concerned, that is the publication in print of a lecture purporting to have been delivered at a meeting of the Legitimation League on the 6th of December last year, and which still purports to be the outcome of the Legitimation League. With regard to what has been printed in that pamphlet I am desirous of adding to the plea of the prisoner, as it is recorded now, that it is obscene in its character, and that it was issued with the described intention.

The Recorder: Is the prisoner defended by counsel?

Mr. Matthews: I think not now, my lord.

The Recorder (to the Defendant): You appear here personally, or have you counsel?

The Defendant: I am quite indifferent, my lord, as to that. Mr. Matthews says there is no counsel representing me. If that is so, I am prepared to go through without counsel.

The Recorder: Very well.

Mr. Matthews: The 3d count of the indictment — and it is right, I think, that your lordship should have these matters before you — refers to the issue of the January number of a so-called magazine, which has the title of 'The Adult,' and the extract in the January number is referred to in the 3d count of the Indictment, and is said to be now confessed by the Defendant to be obscene in its character.

My lord, on behalf of the Prosecution represented by my friend Mr. Danckwertz and myself, we are content, as is the Commissioner of Police — who was responsible for the conduct of this prosecution before the magistrate, and is responsible here to-day — we are content to accept the plea of the prisoner on the 1st, 2nd, and 3d counts, more especially; but I may tell your lordship that so far as the eight remaining counts are concerned — the Indictment consisting of

eleven counts — the eight remaining all of them refer to other numbers of that same periodical in the so-called magazine entitled 'The Adult.' My lord, since the defendant has thought right to plead guilty to the 3d count, which says of every one of those, that it is obscene, and since he has in public made confession that it is so, we will content ourselves so far as the remaining counts are concerned, to forego proceeding with regard to them, referring as they do to other numbers of that magazine. But I may here say that it must not be for one moment understood that we withdraw in any sense the charge that we make against him in connection with those counts, that they are obscene in their character.

May I tell your lordship that in the first instance when this prosecution was started it was conceived by those in authority, that the Defendant who is before you, was a chief offender in the publication and sale of this disgusting book, in the publication and sale of this disgusting lecture, in the publication and sale of this disgusting magazine. That was then the belief that he was the prime mover, at all events the prime mover in the circulation of this specious literature. But, my lord, on examination, I am glad to be able to tell your lordship, he has shown us that we were mistaken in this belief, and I am very glad to be able to give your lordship that assurance to-day, because, the magisterial inquiry being over, the Defendant took a course of which I think your lordship will entirely approve, for he himself, of his own action, without any invitation at all, went to the authorities at Scotland Yard, placed himself in communication with them, and to them he disclosed what he said was the actual position which he occupied with regard to the publication and sale of this work. My lord, he did more than that: he asked the police at Scotland Yard to make inquiry for the purpose of satisfying those officers that what he told them was true, and that he had taken no principal part in this terrible traffic, but that his part was entirely subordinate, and so subordinate that he was able to reduce it to its proper proportion, and that the result of what he said, followed by the inquiry made by the police, was to show that so far as the sale and publication was concerned, during the whole time that the prisoner was acting as sub-agent for

what is called 'The Watford University Press,' and that in publishing this book, he, the defendant, acted as sub-agent for that press at some premises in John Street, Bedford Row.

The Recorder: What is it called?

Mr. Matthews: The Watford University Press, my lord.

The Recorder: It has nothing to do with any University at all, I suppose?

Mr. Matthews: No, my lord, it is a mere title.

The Recorder: It is a very high-sounding title, which may take in a great many people.

Mr. Matthews: No doubt, my lord, and we may take it to be so. For that purpose, no doubt, it was, as I told you, but I do not think the defendant was responsible for that. However that may be, it did make it clear that during the time he was in office in John Street, Bedford Row, there had been personally sold by him, three copies, and only three copies of this work at all. He also called attention to the fact — and he had a perfect right in calling attention to it — that before the time he was employed upon these premises there was employed there another sub-agent, who had been there for a considerable time, and that sub-agent was called by us before the magistrate, and that before the time he went there no doubt there was an exceedingly large sale under him. In addition to that there was another salesman. There was a housekeeper employed during the time the Defendant was employed there, and that housekeeper sold no less than ten copies, all in the absence of the Defendant.

The Recorder: Surely that is not the girl of 16 who was allowed to handle these wretched books?

Mr. Matthews: No, my lord, she is an older woman than that. The defendant has been able to show (and that is one of the substantial grounds of his appeal) that there preceded him a man who extensively sold these books, and against whom no proceedings have been taken, while the Defendant says, 'I sold no more than three in all.' There was another person employed at the same time, who sold more than three times that number. They are witnesses, but there is that difference between him and them, which he asks to have directly pointed out to you. Then on its being said, 'Oh, but as far as you were concerned, you were in authority,

and you were the person actually in control.' 'Not so,' says the Defendant. 'The person really in control, and the person who had the control of the Watford University Press, and the person who made all the profits out of the sale of those books produced by the Watford University Press, was a Dr. De Villiers.' That was the man at the head of the Watford University Press, and that was the man who made the profit out of these things, and that was the man who for a long time then had been the offender — the head and front of the offending — the outcome of circulating this class of literature. That that is the fact there can be no question at all. My lord, Dr. De Villiers has absconded. Against Dr. De Villiers a warrant has been applied for, and granted, and if Dr. De Villiers, who I am told is abroad at this moment, shall venture to return to this country, he may be quite certain that that warrant will be followed by immediate execution. My lord, may I say that those discoveries do very materially reduce the quality of the prisoner's guilt in regard to the publication and sale of this book. No doubt, with regard to the lecture, the subject matter of count 2 of the Indictment, that is an outcome of the Legitimation League; it was not a lecture delivered by the Defendant at all, but it was a lecture delivered by some person quite distinct from him. It was a lecture delivered by one who styles himself 'Oswald Dawson,' and it was delivered before the Legitimation League, although unquestionably at the time of its delivery the Defendant was the Secretary of that League. My lord, in reference to his connection with that League the Defendant gave an earnest assurance that he would, as far as he himself was concerned, from the date he was speaking, sever all connection with that League, and that he would sever himself from it once and forever, that he would have no further dealing with it, and that he would decline any capacity which he held under it. With regard to the three indictments dealing with the publication in the so-called magazine in the January number, there again no doubt the Defendant was the editor of that magazine, and he was so advertised upon the outward leaves of it. But there again he told the authorities that he had determined to sever himself, not only from this magazine, and from the publication of this magazine, but he would sever himself once and

forever from the publication of anything of a similar nature, or which could be described as similar to this in future, that he would cut himself adrift from all surroundings by which he had been connected with the Legitimation League, and from all surroundings connecting with this particular magazine.

My lord, those assurances being given, and it then being realised that the real head and front of this offending was the absconding man Dr. De Villiers, and it then being realised the part that the Defendant had played in this story, that no money had gone to him as the proceeds of the sale of the book, and that so far as his connection with this League and his connection with this magazine is concerned, though there had been that connection, he is desirous forthwith of severing himself, my lord, we do find evidence of good faith; and the giving of that assurance by the Defendant to us, given as it were in the course of this month of October, I return to what is said to be the November number of the issue of that magazine, and we there find the name of another editor upon its title page. The Defendant, therefore, has fulfilled that undertaking in so far as that magazine is concerned. I only now venture to add in your lordship's hearing — and I trust in doing so I do not exceed my duty at all — in saying that so far as that magazine is concerned, it is one which will receive considerable watchfulness from those who are in authority, and that they who now go on with its publication must do so, fully conscious that here, in a public court, one number of this same magazine has been confessed to be obscene in its character, and the publication of it is of such a character as to involve criminal punishment. My lord, I trust that those who are responsible for the conduct of this so-called magazine will bear that well in mind, because, as I say, the contents of it must of necessity be somewhat keenly watched by those in authority.

Now, my lord, the Defendant, having convinced us of his actual position, and moreover, after his undertaking I am glad to be able to tell your lordship that he is a young man, as your lordship can see, and moreover, he is a young man of very considerable capacity —

The Recorder: One of the horrible things in connection with this filthy publication is that one woman bearing his

name has been taking part in it, because I see a portrait in this magazine. I presume it is his wife.

Mr. Matthews: My lord, I presume so. My lord, I understand that is so. What the authorities desire to place before your lordship is this: having this plea recorded of this young man, who has occupied this subordinate position, and fulfilled one of those undertakings, the authorities are content, having regard to the surroundings of this particular case, if your lordship will defer your passing sentence upon this young man before you, and that you will allow him to go out upon his own recognizances to come up for judgment when called upon. We conceive that that course will have a very salutary effect, because it may be he will be able to turn the good talents which he evidently has to a useful purpose, and he will know and will be thoroughly able to recognise that if he shall turn them in the direction — or in any such direction as he has promised not to turn them to — he will know that he is liable upon this conviction which has been recorded upon this Indictment. I therefore ask that your lordship, under all the circumstances of the case, will adopt the course we suggest, and accept from me the complete statement of what the Defendant has said, and take the lenient course which the authorities desire to commend to your lordship for adoption.

Judgment

The Recorder: George Bedborough, you have pleaded guilty to the 1st, 2nd, and 3d counts of this Indictment, and you have acted wisely in so pleading to these counts, for it would have been impossible for you to have contended with any possibility whatever of being able to persuade anybody that this book, this lecture, and this magazine were not filthy and obscene works.

Now, I have listened with great care to the address of the learned counsel, Mr. Matthews, who appears for the prosecution in this case, and I think it is right and proper that he should point out to the court and to you, as the leading spirit in this venture, what he has done. I am willing to believe that in acting as you did, you might at the first outset perhaps have been gulled into the belief that somebody might say that this was a scientific work. But it is impos-

sible for anybody with a head on his shoulders to open the book without seeing that it is a pretence and a sham, and that it is merely entered into for the purpose of selling this obscene publication. But it has been pointed out to me, as I say, that you have taken a very small part in this, and I am unwilling myself that you should suffer while others go scot-free who have taken a much bigger part in this affair than you have; and I am willing to believe that the instructions you have given are genuine and well-founded. Again I must say that my greatest regret in this connection is to find a female, with your consent — a woman bearing your name — is put forward as an active participator in these unwholesome and filthy discussions. If you can use such influence as you have — and you can do so if you choose — I hope you will; and after the assurance you have given I trust it will not be necessary for anyone near and dear to you to be brought here. I agree with what Mr. Matthews has said. The law is slow but sure, and this sort of thing could not be tolerated, and if it goes on it must be put down by the strong arm of the law. I shall take the course which he has thrown out to the court. I shall postpone sentence in this case, or rather, I shall bind you over upon recognizances to come up for judgment if called upon. The result of that will be this — that so long as you do not touch this filthy work again with your hands and so long as you lead a respectable life, you will hear no more of this. But if you choose to go back to your evil ways, you will be brought up before me, and it will be my duty to send you to prison for a very long term.

The sentence of the Court upon you is that you be bound over in your own recognizances, in the sum of £100, to come up for judgment if called upon.

And thus the great fight for a principle, the splendid storm that was to clear the sky, turned into a chilling drizzle. Astonishment and rage were expressed on all sides. None of the actual points at issue had been dealt with; after so much organizing and shouting the trial had proved to be a fiasco. The cause of free speech was dealt another serious blow, an able scientific work had been viciously slandered and nothing had been ac-

complished by all the efforts of the Defence Committee. On the following day the newspaper account of the trial was placed between cases of conspiracy and procuring.

More shocked and hurt than angered, Ellis helplessly watched the progress of the case through four fatiguing months, with no legal right to defend the scientific character of his book, although it was the real subject of the trial. He saw the first part of his life-work, intended for only a small body of intelligent readers, dragged by policemen through the common gutter, and then branded 'filthy and obscene,' 'a pretence and a sham,' in a high court of justice.

However, he was not to be diverted from his destined course and immediately returned to Cornwall in order to finish another volume of the *Studies* before going to Morocco for a vacation. With what for him was incredible speed, he dictated the chapters on 'sexual periodicity' (all the material being in hand), to a skilful stenographer. (The chapters on modesty and auto-erotism were already written.) As a result of the recent trouble, he resolved that the *Studies* were no longer to be published in England and made that condition with De Villiers who agreed to bring out the new volume on the Continent.

In *The Lancet* of November 19th there was an editorial entitled 'The Question of Indecent Literature,' explaining why *Sexual Inversion* had not been reviewed in their columns. The scientific tone of Ellis's work was not questioned. 'What decided us not to review the book was its method of publication. Why was it not published through a house able to take proper measures for introducing it as a scientific book to a scientific audience? And for other reasons, which it would serve no purpose to particularize, we considered

the circumstances attended upon its issue suspicious.' Ellis's reply appeared in *The Lancet* the following week: 'You ask the very pertinent question: Why was not the book issued by a medical publisher? The answer is simple. None of the medical publishers whom I approached cared to take up a book on the subject of sexual inversion, one or two adding that they would have done so with pleasure had it not been their privilege to live in England. After a delay of two years due to this cause, I heard through a scientific friend that a gentleman interested in various philosophic and scientific subjects was preparing to go into business under a trading name for the publication of a few philosophic and scientific works and that he would be willing to issue my book. Ultimately I agreed to place the work in his hands on the definite condition that it should not be advertised or sent for review in any but medical and scientific quarters. In justice to the publisher I must point out that my book is the only one of his publications, mostly very serious in character, which has been incriminated.'

As there remained in the air a general sense of astonishment and misunderstanding, Ellis privately printed (at the University Press) *A Note on the Bedborough Trial*, a small pamphlet accounting for his personal attitude in the matter. Having sketched carefully the history of the case, he announced the steps that he was compelled to take:

'When proceedings were first taken against Mr. Bedborough I at once, with the consent of the publishers, suspended the sale of the book. Subsequently I decided, whatever the verdict might be, to continue to withhold the book for a considerable period, having no wish to avail myself of the enormous advertisement spontaneously offered by the police. Moreover, I have

now decided not to publish the remaining volumes of my Studies in England. I propose here to state the reasons for a course which many of my friends regard as a confession of defeat.

'Intelligent spectators of life have declared that this prosecution of a book-seller for selling a purely scientific work will mark an epoch so far as our country is concerned. It has acted as a *reductio ad absurdum*, they say; it has quickened the public conscience to a finer sense of what is fitting in these matters. Henceforth public opinion will be strong enough to check at the outset any foolish interference of the police with scientific discussion. Just as a police charge of "blasphemy," which twenty years ago was a real and serious charge, would to-day only arouse a smile, so, it is said, never again could a scientific book, issued and sold as this was, be dragged into the mire of the courts as "obscene," or a reputable citizen who sold such a book be haled before the magistrate on a charge of "corrupting the morals" of his fellow subjects.

'It may be so. I would gladly believe that any action of mine had assisted my countrymen to win that intellectual freedom which is already possessed by every other civilised country except Russia. But no one can give any guarantee that such will be the fact, and life is too short to enable me to wait another twenty years to verify the prophecy.

'It must be remembered that so far as an author is concerned the injury done by such a prosecution is done in the act of bringing it. The manifold chances that befall a book on any highly specialised and technical subject, when submitted to a judge and jury, may or may not lead to the justification of the author. The injury is already done. The anxiety and uncertainty produced by so infamous a charge on a man and on

those who belong to him, the risk of loss of friends, the pecuniary damages, the proclamation to the world at large, which has never known and will never know the grounds on which the accusation is made, that an author is to be classed with the purveyors of literary garbage — this power is put into the hands of any meddlesome member of that sad class against which the gods themselves are powerless.

'The mere expectation of such a prosecution is fatal. In submitting to these conditions an author puts his publisher and printer and their agents into an unmerited position of danger; he risks the distortion of his own work while it is in progress; and when he has written a book which is approved by the severest and most competent judges he is tempted to adapt it to the vulgar tastes of the policeman.

'How real the danger is to which an author, in submitting to these conditions of publication, subjects the distributors of his book, we have an object lesson in the present case. Here is a man who, in his leisure time, edits and publishes a magazine with the object of discussing social questions of the gravest importance. Yet when such a man sells in an almost private manner a few copies of a book written by another man, with whose aims and objects he probably has little in common, the whole responsible machinery of social order is, at the public expense, set in action to crush him. Such is the risk to which an author subjects the mere distributors of his book.

'This is a risk to others, and a domination over myself, which I at all events have no intention of submitting to. In this country it is a sufficiently hard task for any student to deal with the problems of sex, even under the most favourable circumstances. He already, as it were, carries his life in his hands. He has entered a

field which is largely given over to faddists and fanatics, to ill-regulated minds of every sort. He must, at the same time, be prepared to find that the would-be sagacity of imbeciles counts him the victim of any perversion he may investigate. Even from well-balanced and rational persons he must at first meet with a certain amount of distrust and opposition. To encounter this inevitable and legitimate opposition, and to preserve his serenity and equipose, is itself a sufficient strain on any man. It would be foolish to place oneself as well beneath the censure of an ignorant and too zealous police official, and to accept the chain of uncertain evils, and the certain public stigma, which a prosecution necessarily involves.

'Moreover, it must be noted, the police naturally desire that their intervention shall be successful, and it is their interest to prejudice matters by discrediting the object of their attack. This was ingeniously done in the present case by proceeding against a book-seller who was in no way connected with the production of the incriminated book, or in any way concerned with the scientific questions it discussed, but who was intimately connected with a society and a magazine devoted to the open and popular propaganda of unconventional views on marriage, matters with which I, on my side, had no connection. Thus in every newspaper a stain of prejudice is affixed to an author or a book, not to be wiped off by any subsequent explanation, and for which no compensation can ever be obtained.

'Under these circumstances, therefore, the difficulties of publishing the remaining volumes of my *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* in England are sufficiently obvious, and the decision I have been forced to reach seems inevitable. To wrestle in the public arena for freedom of speech is a noble task which may worthily be under-

taken by any man who can devote to it the best energies of his life. It is not, however, a task which I have ever contemplated. I am a student, and my path has long been marked out. I may be forced to pursue it under unfavourable conditions, but I do not intend that any consideration shall induce me to swerve from it, nor do I intend to injure my work or distort my vision of life by entering upon any struggle. The pursuit of the martyr's crown is not favourable to the critical and dispassionate investigation of complicated problems. A student of nature, of men, of books, may dispense with wealth or position; he cannot dispense with quietness and serenity. I insist on doing my own work in my own way, and cannot accept conditions which make this work virtually impossible. Certainly I regret that my own country should be almost alone in refusing to me the conditions of reasonable intellectual freedom. I regret it the more since I deal with the facts of English life, and prefer to address English people. But I must leave to others the task of obtaining the reasonable freedom that I am unable to attain.'

So much for that. Weary of barbarism, Ellis went with his wife to spend Christmas in Morocco.

CHAPTER XIII

FREUD AND ELLIS

They were a month at Tangier, Ellis's only contact with Oriental modes of life, and then went across to Malaga for three months. 'This escape from prudery, stupidity and vulgarity,' he wrote later, 'made keener the sense of our delight in the sunshine and colour of the South and the graciousness of the people, alike in Morocco and in Spain.'[1] Forty years earlier Flaubert had come away from the unsuccessful prosecution of *Madame Bovary* under a similar cloud, dismayed by the future, very sad and very tired: 'I am going back at once to my house in the country, far from "humanity," as they say in tragedy, and there I will try to put some new strings in my poor guitar, which was spattered with mud before its first air was played.'[2]

The wounds Ellis received in that trial have never entirely healed. He could not cease to feel that the work of his life had been smirched by a poisonous monster, and there hung over him the possibility of similar attacks. In the public mind he was not only linked in a scandalous way with the dark subject of sex, but specifically with its perverse, anomalous aspects, which were not his main concern. Most people still believe that he wallows preferably in the marshes of emotion and writes exclusively of sexual aberrations. For the sake of simple accuracy it should be emphasized that the first volume of Ellis's *Studies* dealt with the theme most tabooed by the English-speaking soul only because of John Addington Symonds's generous offer to

[1] Note in *Stories and Essays*, by Mrs. Havelock Ellis, I, xv.

[2] R. Descharmes and R. Dumesnil: *Autour de Flaubert*, I, 41.

collaborate. Owing to the interference of Symonds's executors, Ellis was not able to give this explanation in the preface of the English edition, but had to be content with the vague remark, 'It happened that this part of my book was finished first.' Had Ellis opened with some other phase of the sex problem, he would not have been placed in so questionable a light and it is barely possible that no such outrage as the Bedborough prosecution would have been perpetrated.

On returning home from Spain, Ellis found that De Villiers was publishing the new volume of the *Studies* in England, but with 'Leipzig' on the title-page, in complete violation of his agreement *not* to publish the book in England. Thereupon Ellis severed his relations with De Villiers, although up to that time he had no serious grievance against him, and no knowledge of his utterly unscrupulous habits. It turned out that De Villiers's real name was George Ferdinand Springmuhl von Weissenfeld, a man of many aliases, who won and lost a series of fortunes during his stay in England. A melodramatic character, gentle, morose, intellectual, with a passion for mystification, he engaged in numerous frauds and conspiracies. As the head of the University Press, however, he published *The Adult* satisfactorily, as well as *Sexual Inversion* and other scholarly works, so it was hardly fair to draw him into the Bedborough trial as a stage-villain, a wicked monster profiting from a vicious traffic. As a matter of fact he was never indicted by the authorities on that score, but when at the point of arrest for other reasons some two or three years later he killed himself in his home near Cambridge.

Immediately after breaking with De Villiers, Ellis got into touch with the F. A. Davis Company, medical publishers of Philadelphia (who had already brought

out Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* in English translation), arranged with them without delay for a new edition of the second volume published by De Villiers, and revised and enlarged it for publication in the United States as Volume I, with sections on 'The Evolution of Modesty,' 'The Phenomena of Sexual Periodicity,' and 'Auto-Erotism.' *Sexual Inversion*, published in 1901 by the Davis Company, became Number II of the new series. The sixth and what was intended to be the last, *Sex in Relation to Society*, appeared in 1910, but is being followed in the present year (1928) by a seventh volume, *Eonism and Other Supplementary Studies*. Since the signing of the contract in May, 1899, the entire series has remained in the hands of the F. A. Davis Company, who send out annually to all points of the compass hundreds of sets, invaluable messages from the 'city of brotherly love.'

Before Ellis began his *magnum opus*, it was only vaguely outlined, but developed definitely as he went along. The opening study of modesty [1] in Volume I was of pioneer value and typical of Ellis's mode of treatment — (*a*) a concise definition, (*b*) historical and illustrative material drawn from an enormous range of literature, (*c*) expansion of the definition in terms of physiology and psychology, (*d*) conclusions, with some comments on the future development of the subject. As modesty had been so 'modestly' avoided by the academic psychologists, Ellis went into a rather lengthy discussion of that ambiguous virtue. He found it rooted ultimately in the sexual periodicity of the female animal and the natural fear of causing disgust, complicated by magic practices, the use of ornament

[1] With reference to studies of erotic shame, Iwan Bloch said in 1907: 'Above all worthy of mention are the clear-sighted investigations of Havelock Ellis.' (*The Sexual Life of Our Time*, Eng. trans., 128.)

and clothing, and the conception of women as property. But disgust decreases with knowledge, desire grows candid, and modesty is less tyrannical. 'Civilization tends to subordinate, if not to minimize, modesty, to render it a grace of life rather than a fundamental social law of life. But an essential grace of life it still remains, and whatever delicate variations it may assume we can scarcely conceive of its disappearance.' [1] With reference to an Italian woman who chose to be burned alive rather than be seen without clothes, Ellis wrote during the war, 'So far as it has been within my power I have always sought to place bombs beneath the world in which that woman lived, so that it might altogether go up in flames.' On the other hand, he heard of a nurse on a torpedoed troopship, who said, 'Excuse me, boys, I must save the Tommies,' as she stripped off her clothes and jumped in to rescue a dozen of them. 'That woman belongs to my world. Now and again I have come across the like, sweet and feminine and daring women who have done things as brave as that, and even much braver because more complexly difficult, and always I feel my heart swinging like a censer before them, going up in a perpetual fragrance of love and adoration.' [2] So modesty, another form of purity, combining clarity and courage, runs through the writings of Ellis and becomes their perpetual theme.

Of more special interest was his study of Auto-Erotism, also contained in Volume I, but first published in April, 1898, in *The Alienist and Neurologist* (of St. Louis). By *auto-erotism* Ellis meant 'the phenomena of spontaneous sexual emotion generated in the absence of an external stimulus proceeding, directly or indirectly, from another person,' including erotic dreams,

[1] *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, I, 82.

[2] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 130–31.

voluptuous reverie, masturbation and some aspects of hysteria, as well as much of religion and art. 'It is a great service performed by Havelock Ellis,' wrote Bloch, 'that he was the first to direct attention to the "involuntary" manifestations of the sexual impulse peculiar to mankind, occurring without relation to the other sex' (*The Sexual Life of Our Time*, Eng. trans., 409), and in 1905, Freud made auto-erotic, 'the happy term invented by Havelock Ellis,' an essential element of the psychoanalytic vocabulary.[1] The extreme form of auto-erotism Ellis saw in the Narcissus-like tendency of the sexual emotions to be absorbed, and often entirely lost, in self-admiration, and cited the case of a woman who manifested that tendency. A year later Ellis's article was abstracted in the *Archiv für Psychiatrie*, by his friend Dr. Paul Näcke of Leipzig. As a translation of Ellis's 'Narcissus-like tendency,' Näcke coined the German word *Narcismus*, which soon fell into frequent usage by psychiatrists, and was later adopted by the Freudians to describe a universal stage of sexual development. In a recent article on 'The Conception of Narcissism,' Ellis said: 'I seem responsible for the first generalized description of this psychological attitude, and for the invocation of Narcissus; the "ism" was appended by Näcke. It seems correct to attribute to me the description of the condition as a normal state with morbid exaggerations, but the *term* should only be attributed to me in association with Näcke, though Näcke himself used it as though it were my term.'[2]

In his reasoned, sober comment on masturbation Ellis refused to say anything about treatment or prevention. More than a century of eloquent recklessness

[1] *Three Contributions to Sexual Theory*, Eng. trans., 43.

[2] *The Psychoanalytic Review*, April, 1927.

had beclouded the topic and produced an unnecessary epidemic of horror. Only a handful of writers had been capable of looking at the matter calmly. By seeing it in perspective, connected with other auto-erotic activities, Ellis helped to make a sane view possible. On this note he concluded his original essay:

'Auto-erotic phenomena are inevitable. The only question before us is the degree and the character of the particular manifestation which may most harmfully or most beneficially be permitted. And that, it seems to me, on a review of the whole series of phenomena, is not a question on which we are entitled to be dogmatic. Every case must be judged on its own merits. We have to recognize that while in one sense all forms of auto-erotism are unnatural, in another sense they are all natural. In different cases the repressed impulses will take on different forms. It is our wisest course to recognize the inevitableness of such manifestations under the perpetual restraints of civilized life, and while avoiding any attitude of excessive indulgence or indifference, to avoid also any attitude of excessive horror, for our horror not only blinds us effectually by putting the facts to flight, but itself serves to manufacture artificially a greater evil than that which we seek to combat.

'The sexual impulse is not, as some have imagined, the sole root of the most massive human emotions, the most brilliant human aptitudes — of sympathy, of art, of religion. In the complex human organism, where all the parts are so many-fibred and so closely interwoven, no great manifestation can be reduced to one single source. But it largely enters into and moulds all of those emotions and aptitudes, and that by virtue of its most peculiar characteristics: it is, in the first place, the deepest and most volcanic of human impulses, and,

in the second place — unlike the only other human impulse with which it can be compared, the nutritive impulse — it can, to a large extent, be transmuted into a new force capable of the strangest and most various uses. So that in the presence of all these manifestations we may assert that in a real sense, though subtly mingled with very diverse elements, auto-erotism everywhere plays its part. In the manifestations of auto-erotism, we are concerned, not with a form of insanity, not necessarily with a form of depravity, but with the inevitable by-products of that mighty process on which the animal creation rests.'

As a further aspect of auto-erotism, Ellis went on in a second article, published originally in *The Alienist and Neurologist* of October, 1898, to consider 'Hysteria in Relation to the Sexual Emotions.' This was the field long dominated by Charcot, the great French neurologist, who was the real father of modern psychiatry. In the face of a triumphant medical materialism he showed that mental diseases are not simple products of morbid brain conditions — problems in cerebral anatomy, but are caused by ideas, feelings, processes that cannot be subjected to the microscope or scalpel. In particular, he insisted that hysteria was of psychic origin, and by way of proof, induced in hypnotized patients hysterical symptoms such as paralysis and anesthesia.

At the same time Charcot seemed to be destroying the ancient sexual theory of hysteria. The term itself was derived from the Greek word 'hysteron,' meaning womb, for the Greek physicians believed that hysteria was exclusively a female ailment seated in the womb. In the seventeenth century it was redefined as a brain condition which might also be exhibited by males, but the sex emphasis continued to hold sway until about

1860. Then the medical world almost unanimously began to realize that such an interpretation was a vicious libel on womanhood, for the Continent as well as England had become Victorian. At this point Charcot came forward: had he not proved that hysteria was a mental disorder? Consequently, was not the visceral interpretation preposterous? And was not any sex hypothesis degrading? We do not understand the essential nature of hysteria — except that it has nothing to do with sexual matters!

However, in the year that Charcot died, 1893, one of his own pupils was preparing a bombshell in Vienna. When Sigmund Freud, aged twenty-eight, went to Paris in 1885, he thought of mental pathology as a part of brain anatomy and was not especially interested in problems of sex, but he returned home the next year to sing the praises of Charcot and preach to deaf ears the psychic origin of hysteria. He also viewed in a new light the ingenious method employed several years earlier by Josef Breuer, an old family friend. That physician had cured an extreme case of hysteria by talking frequently with his patient in an hypnotic state and gradually unearthing the forgotten experiences which produced her symptoms. Here was the vital complement of the Frenchman's discovery. 'Charcot had shown that by instilling suitable ideas it was possible to cause hysterical symptoms. Breuer showed that hysterical symptoms vanish when the pathogenic idea can be disinterred from the unconscious.' [1] Freud persuaded Breuer to take up again the 'cathartic' treatment which he had discarded without appreciating its importance, and began to practice it successfully himself. This is half the story.

What is the typical cause, the fundamental source of

[1] Fritz Wittels: *Sigmund Freud*, Eng. trans., 38.

hysteria? Charcot excluded sex and answered vaguely, heredity. But Freud once happened to overhear Charcot describing to a colleague the case of a pronounced invalid whose condition, he maintained, was due entirely to sexual maladjustment; 'dans des cas pareils c'est toujours la chose génitale, toujours . . . toujours . . . toujours.' The suggestion astonished Freud at the time but as he was absorbed in other problems he did not take it up seriously. On two later occasions he heard Breuer and Chrobak, the noted Viennese gynæcologist, diagnose two obscure cases in precisely Charcot's words, as if they should be taken as a matter of course. Then, slowly, unconsciously, Freud came to his critical solution, 'These three identical opinions, which I had heard without understanding, had lain dormant in my mind for years until one day they awoke in the form of an apparently original idea.' [1] *Sexual repression is the chief source of hysteria.*

This intellectual conversion occurred around the year 1890, when Freud was in his early thirties. In 1893 he collaborated with Breuer on a preliminary paper and two years later their famous *Studien über Hysterie* was published. Thence springs the newer psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and, for better or for worse, a revolution in our moral world. Immediately the stampede was on, or, as Freud says, 'A vacuum rapidly formed itself about my person.' But human nature abhors a vacuum, and accordingly that vacuum is now filled only too compactly.

In the summer of 1896, the English journal of neurology, *Brain*, contained a fourteen-page review of the Freud-Breuer book, by J. Mitchell Clark, who stated in conclusion that 'their theories give, in psychological terms, an explanation of some of the characteristics of

[1] Sigmund Freud: *On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement.*

hysteria, long established by medical observation, and some of them matters of common knowledge. It is interesting to note a return, in part at least, to the old theory of the origin of hysteria in sexual disorders, especially as the tendency of late years has been to attach very much less importance to them.' [1] It was this article which introduced Ellis to Freud and induced him to buy *Studien über Hysterie*. He was prepared for such views as he had himself stated in *Man and Woman* (1894), that 'the part played by the sexual emotions in hysteria was underestimated,' and incidentally he was glad to see the Olympian prestige of Charcot shaken. 'I read the book,' Ellis tells us, 'with rare intellectual delight, apart from any agreement with its thesis, simply because that thesis was presented with a sympathetic intuition and a power of skilful analysis which had never before, even by Janet, been expended on the delicate and elusive mechanisms of the disordered emotions. I still think that there is no simpler or more persuasive introduction to Freud's work than this first book.' [2]

In the course of that original study of auto-erotism in 1898, Ellis said: 'I agree with Breuer and Freud, the distinguished Viennese investigators of hysteria, who seem to me to have thrown more light on its psychic character than any other recent investigators, that the sexual needs of the hysterical are just as individual and various as those of normal women, but that they suffer from them more, largely through a moral struggle with their own instincts, and the attempt to put them into the background of consciousness.' In a second article devoted to the relation between hysteria and the sexual emotions Ellis gave a full exposition of the Freud-Breuer theory. After sketching the history of the sub-

[1] *Brain*, XIX, 1896, part III. [2] *The Philosophy of Conflict*, 200.

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SIGMUND FREUD

ject and the rôle played by Charcot, he continued: 'Charcot had affirmed the power, not only of physical traumatism, but even of psychic lesions — of moral shocks — to provoke its manifestations, but his sole contribution to the psychology of this psychic malady lay in the one word "suggestibility"; the nature and mechanism of this psychic process he left wholly unexplained. This step was left to others, in part to Charcot's successor, Janet, and in a very large measure, I am inclined to think, to the Viennese investigators, Breuer and Freud, and by taking it they have, I venture to say, not only made the first really important contribution to our knowledge of hysteria since Charcot's investigations, but have opened the way to the only field in which the study of hysteria can now perhaps be fruitful. Freud, to whom probably the chief part of this advance belongs, began as a disciple of Charcot. . . . It is the greatest merit of Breuer's and Freud's investigations, that while furnishing a justification of the imperfectly understood idea that had floated in the mind of observers ever since the name "hysteria" was first invented — they have certainly supplied a definite psychic explanation of a psychic malady. They have succeeded in presenting clearly, at the expense of much labor, insight and sympathy, a dynamic view of the psychic processes involved in the constitution of the hysterical state, and such a view seems to show that the physical symptoms laboriously brought to light by Charcot are largely but epiphenomena and by-products of an emotional process, often of tragic significance to the subject, which is taking place in the most sensitive recess of the psychic organism.'

Although such words about Freud are commonplace to-day, they were exceedingly rare in 1898. Soon after reading the *Studien über Hysterie* Ellis wrote to Freud

and since then they have exchanged many publications and corresponded occasionally. They have never met personally, but on both sides there is a sense of genuine friendship as well as warm admiration. Working toward the same end, objects of the same bitter prejudice, the currents of their thought have intermingled constantly during the past thirty years.

Ellis began to keep a careful record of his vivid dreams while at medical school and published his main conclusions as an essay, 'The Stuff that Dreams are Made of,' in 1899, the year before Freud's epochal volume, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, and two years before Bergson's popular lecture on the same subject. 'In dreams,' Ellis wrote, 'we are taken back into an earlier world. It is a world much more like that of the savage, the child, the criminal, the madman, than is the world of our respectable, civilized waking life.' The study of dreams 'reveals to us an archaic world of vast emotions and imperfect thoughts.' This latter passage, according to Freud, was a happy anticipation of his own deduction that *primitive* modes of work suppressed during the day participate in the formation of dreams. There were also two further passages which had a distinct Freudian note. 'The profound emotions of waking life, the questions and problems on which we spread our chief voluntary mental energy, are not those which usually present themselves at once to dream consciousness. It is, so far as the immediate past is concerned, mostly the trifling, the incidental, the "forgotten" impressions of daily life which reappear in our dreams. The psychic activities that are awake most intensely are those that sleep most profoundly.' 'In the waking moments of our complex civilized life we are ever in a state of suspense which makes all great conclusions impossible; the multiplicity

of the facts of life, always present to consciousness, restrains the free play of logic (except for that happy dreamer, the mathematician) and surrounds most of our pains and nearly all our pleasures with infinite qualifications. In our dreams the fetters of civilization are loosened and we know the fearful joy of freedom.'

These convictions enabled Ellis to approach Freud's theories with much sympathy. In reviewing the smaller book, *Ueber den Traum*, in 1901, he began, 'The author shows here the same power of delicate analysis which marked his study of hysteria,' [1] and stated briefly the conception of dreams as concealed fulfilments of repressed desires. That explanation Ellis accepted as valid for a large class of dreams, but he could not allow it to exclude his own earlier theory that dreams are primarily a process of reasoning — crude, symbolic attempts to account for the disturbing elements in the sleeping consciousness. All kinds of exciting emotions are aroused by sensory stimuli, external or internal, and by remote or recent memories; in aimless fashion, the unorganized, stupefied mind seeks satisfactory causes for these emotions, and so we dream. For example, Ellis mentions the volcanic eruptions that may be set up by a distended stomach. 'We are thereby thrown into a state of uninhibited emotional agitation, a state of agony and terror such as we rarely or never attain during waking life. Sleeping consciousness, blindfolded and blundering, a prey to these massive waves from below, and fumbling about desperately for some explanation, jumps at the idea that only the attempt to escape some terrible danger or the guilty consciousness of some awful crime can account for this immense emotional uproar. Thus the dream is suffused by a conviction which the continued

[1] *The Journal of Mental Science*, April, 1901.

emotion serves to support. . . . And the fact that in such dreams we are far more concerned with escape from the results of the crime than with any agony of remorse is not, as some have thought, due to our innate indifference to crime, but simply to the fact that our emotional state suggests to us active escape from danger rather than the more passive grief of remorse.' A theory of dreams very similar to Ellis's is held to-day by two American psychologists, Horton and H. L. Hollingworth, who are sharply opposed to Freud's speculations. 'I have come,' writes Horton, 'to regard the successive evocations of imagery in the dream and even their reciprocal adaptations under the influence of creative fancy, as being trial perceptions or attempted responses to one or more cues, either sensory or psychic.' [1] For Hollingworth, the dream 'represents, under the ordinary laws of perception, the tentative and approximate appreciation of some detail of an instigated stimulus.'

In 1911 Ellis's various papers on dreams were collected in a single volume, *The World of Dreams*, which is sober rather than spectacular, comprehensive rather than brilliant, and consequently little known. There he said that 'it is due to the genius of Professor Sigmund Freud — to-day the most daring and original psychologist in the field of morbid psychic phenomena — that we owe the long-neglected recognition of the large place of symbolism in dreaming.' But Ellis could not believe that all dream-symbols were the disguise of unsatisfied wishes. Other primitive emotions such as fear may be a motivating force, whereas much of the time intense personal interest recedes into the background, permitting thereby the recuperation which sleep usually gives. As for the dreams brought on by

[1] Quoted by Hollingworth in *The Psychology of Thought*, 119.

sensory stimulation, 'it is,' according to Ellis, 'unreasonable to invoke Freud's formula at all.' In this matter, as in all others, Ellis shrinks from the lure of simplicity, from the single principle which appears to solve all problems. 'In the case of Freud's theory of dream interpretation, I hold the cypher to be real, but I believe that it is impossible to regard so narrow and exclusive an interpretation as adequate to explain the whole world of dreams.'

Some ten years later he made a pioneer study in *dream-synthesis*, based on a hundred dreams of one woman, by way of checking up the method of psychoanalysis, which draws such elaborate inferences from a single dream. He suggested that dream-analysis is related to dream-synthesis as geology is related to geography; the geologist digs down more deeply and arrives at amazing deductions which are often violently disputed by his brother workers, whereas the geographer gives a balanced, comprehensive picture of the entire surface. 'Thus each method has its own advantages and limitations; each really aids the other.' But Ellis continues to believe that dreaming is essentially a process of reasoning. 'A *wish* — and especially a wish for explanation — furnishes the motive force in the elaboration of the impressions and memories present to sleeping consciousness. It is strictly a *conation*, the movement of an impulse in a particular direction. But it cannot furnish an explanation of the dream itself or reveal its mechanism. It is, if we like, the fuel, but not the engine. That is in the sphere of reason, and though we may often (not always) find the reasoning bad — sometimes wildly or fantastically bad — because of the limited, peculiar, or distorted nature of the material which sleeping consciousness has to deal with, it is still reason. If the logical process of reason

could be abolished during sleep there could be no coherent dreaming at all, nothing but unrelated impressions and memories.' [1]

About 1900 the reflections of Ellis and Freud were meeting inadvertently at yet another crucial point. The more material that Ellis collected, the more he appreciated the pervasive character of sexuality, extending far back of its supposed beginning in adolescence, not only in morbid cases, but in normal individuals generally. As evidence of this discovery he began to publish numerous histories of ordinary sexual development, with emphasis on the earlier years. Up to this time books on sex had been filled almost exclusively with extreme cases of perversion, and the whole subject was considered unhealthy as well as unimportant.

In 1905 appeared Freud's basic work, *Three Contributions to Sexual Theory*, which contains, as Fernandez says, 'his most precious gifts to modern thought, the conception of sexual development as a history, and of puberty as a drama.' [2] As one of the few exceptions to his statement that 'no author has to my knowledge recognized the normality of the sexual impulse in childhood,' Freud cited Ellis's case-histories, which substantiated his finding that normal individuals have the same experiences in childhood as neurotics. (In this book also, Freud adopted Ellis's term, *auto-erotism*, and in a later edition, the Ellis-Näcke term, *narcissism*.)

Meanwhile, in the succeeding volumes of his *Studies*, Ellis frequently supported his own conclusions with quotations from Freud, and in 1917 published a gen-

[1] See 'The Synthesis of Dreams' in *The Psychoanalytic Review*, July and Oct., 1925, Jan., 1926.

[2] *Messages*, 280–81.

eral estimate [1] of Freud's work, which was written some years earlier, to be read before an Australian Medical Congress. It is an admirable criticism, ending with the statement that Freud 'has shown the existence of a vast psychic field of which before we had but scanty intimations. The human soul will never again be to human eyes what it was before Freud explored it. He has revealed the possibility of new depths, new subtleties, new complexities, new psychic mechanisms. That is the great and outstanding fact.' Yet again, in 1926, Ellis reviewed McDougall's *Outline of Abnormal Psychology*, in which McDougall made a particular effort to show what was valid in Freud's teachings, in relation to the entire field. With legitimate pride Ellis was able to say that it had been his own aim since 1898 to be 'a mediator between Freud and a still largely hostile world.' In view of these facts it cannot be maintained that Ellis has ignored psychoanalysis or looked on Freud as a rival. He was expounding Freud's principles years before they were widely known, and years before the psychoanalytic movement had even started in England, America and France. He has remained Freud's friend, but never become his disciple.

In character and habit, two men could scarcely be more unlike. While Freud's childhood was marked by constant battles with his robust nephew John and a hated enemy has always been an 'indispensable requirement' of his emotional life, young Ellis was completely immune from quarrels and has practically never known the pleasures of hostility. At sixteen Ellis decided to concentrate on problems of sex and for that purpose studied medicine. Freud began his medical training with no clear end in view and stumbled on the importance of sex when he was about thirty, but in

[1] See *The Philosophy of Conflict.*

the years that followed he put forward a series of mighty hypotheses which seemed to summarize the world. Whether or not he is the Darwin of psychology, he has shed marvellous light on mental disorders, pointed out the significance of infantile and forgotten experiences, described the mechanism of our prejudices and our dreams, and forced us to perceive the omnipresence of Eros. Now more than ever an ethics of fundamental repressions appears to be the betrayal of life. With magnificent energy and bellicose enthusiasm Freud challenged the terrible *odium sexicum* and gathered around himself many valiant disciples. He became the high priest of a school, indeed of a church, which banished brilliant heretics in the name of orthodoxy.

Ellis has formed no school and has desired no disciples. The body of his writings is not held together by any explicit set of dogmas so much as by a common mood. He has laid out a vast groundwork of data, while striving to avoid premature speculations. After Freud's flashing pages, the works of Ellis may seem tame, cold, in comparison. He offers no panaceas, no bold and sweeping generalizations. 'Here,' he says of the realm of dreams, 'as elsewhere, there are no keys which will unlock all doors.' Working in quiet isolation, without the backing of a group or an institution, he has steadily put forth his unpretentious volumes which have imperceptibly colored the thought of a generation. Yet it is those volumes, with their well-documented accounts of human behavior, which no ordinary citizen of the United States has a right to read, while tomes of psychoanalysis, rich in extravagant illustration and dubious symbolism, pass through one popular edition after another.

Invidious comparisons are unnecessary in the case of

two such men. They incarnate permanent, incommensurable types, and the world needs both. There are always Nietzsche's 'sublime ones,' proud and eloquent, inspiring and intoxicating, with a crude, vigorous rhetoric all their own. As leaders of movements, founders of schools, they are confident, persistent, powerful. Their points can be numbered, their epigrams quoted, their immediate influence in many ways measured. It is not with Parables but with Epistles that one attains organized power. 'The genius of the wedge-shaped order' presses on to his explicit goal with fiercely focussed will, often with a host of followers and a chant of triumph. The goal may turn out to be a ghastly illusion or a creative error, for in pursuing a mirage tenaciously, eager crusaders sometimes find a new country.

Then there are those others who see the world in pastel shades rather than cardinal colors. They cannot enjoy the battle which is an anodyne as well as a stimulant. They cannot leap to gorgeous, complete conclusions, although it is their business to draw inferences and come to an end in their reasoning. They are the rare, genuine agnostics, who can never cry Eureka, nor put the universe into an aphorism. They can only look on at the crowded pursuit, and suggest that understanding rather than motion may be the meaning of salvation. If they suffer from any fear, it is that flowering life must be distorted or paralyzed by patterned dogma.

CHAPTER XIV

DIGRESSIONS

As booming choruses of praise for the triumphs of the dying century began to fill the air in the spring of 1899, Ellis's memory dwelt on the slums of London, the dumb, strained faces of the herds on Bank Holiday at Hampstead Heath, and the loathsome factory towns of Lancashire. In the essay on St. Francis he had already pictured men of a remote age coming to marvel at the gloomy ruins of those towns. 'They will seek the massive whirr of vanished mills at dawn, the prolonged clatter of clogs along the pavement, the flutter of shawls down dark alleys, the echo of brutal forgotten oaths. Their eyes will vainly try to recall the men and women of the Victorian era, huddled together in pathetic self-satisfaction beneath a black pall of smoke and disease and death, playing out the tragedy they called life. A tender melancholy mightier than beauty will cling to the decay of that vanished past.'

Sitting in the sunlight on the coast of Cornwall, just after his trip to Morocco and Spain, Ellis poured his wrath, his pity and his best hopes for a better society, into a short book, *The Nineteenth Century: An Utopian Retrospect.* It is the dialogue of two future antiquarians about a forgotten civilization, the 'Victorian,' when people 'revelled in filth, disease and luxury.' 'They knew all about the laws of what they called gravitation, but they thought it impure to ascertain the laws by which human beings are attracted to one another.' 'They seem to have organised precisely those things which ought to be left to the individual, while they left to the individual the things that ought

to be organised.' Yet, the two students agree, those poor Victorians probably enjoyed as much total satisfaction as any other period and had a necessary place in the evolution of humanity. *The Nineteenth Century* was a healthy catharsis for its author and a sound keen book, but not violent or dramatic enough for a widespread hearing.

Ellis loved Spain for the very reason that she took him so far away from the ugliness and unrest of nineteenth-century glories, and his chief hope for her was that she would not become too thoroughly 'civilized.' He went there again for six weeks in the spring of 1901 and even enjoyed Barcelona under martial law. At times it seems to him that the two days' journey from London, by way of Paris, to Catalonia, is the most delightful in the world. He crosses the Pyrenees like one returning to the Promised Land. 'Lo, at once a new Heaven and a new Earth and a new People. A sky that is ever soft and radiant; a land on which strange and fragrant plants flourish, and lakes of crimson poppies glimmer afar; men and women into whose veins seems to have passed something of the lazy sunshine of their sky, something of the rich colour of their earth. Then at last the great city of Barcelona, where work and play are mingled as nowhere else so harmoniously in the whole European world; and, beyond, the sacred height of Montserrat; and, beyond that, all the magic of Spain at my feet.' [1]

Much of this magic is preserved in Ellis's book, *The Soul of Spain*, which he put together after his fifth visit, in 1906. It is not a volume of piquant anecdotes in the manner of the clever journalist nor of the philosopher who travels around the world in order to see his own soul in different postures. It is an attempt

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, I, 71–72.

to disclose what is unique and more or less unchanging in Spanish life and art. Almost as much at home in the field of ethnology as psychology, Ellis brought both erudition and literary grace to his authoritative discussion. In the country he considered the most fascinating in the world he found embodied, first of all, the romantic spirit — 'a mixture, that is, of the mysterious and grandiose with the grotesquely bizarre, of the soaringly ideal with the crudely real.' He found also the traits of perennial savagery — childlike simplicity and intensity of feeling, hardness amounting to delight in pain, austerity combined with disdain for the superfluous, love of idleness tempered by the aptitude for violent action, and indifference to persons and interests outside a very narrow circle. Thus, it would seem, Ellis was fascinated by qualities which were the complete opposite of his own finely balanced nature, English in origin, French in color, unromantic in action. Yet he had a peculiar affinity for the natural asceticism and stoicism of the Spanish people, and he shared their love for ritual, ceremony and dancing.

One would expect him to write with scholarly ease of Spanish women and dancing, but he also has a rare talent, recalling that of his friend Symons, for eliciting the souls of places and of cities. As Madariaga pictured Pérez Galdós, one can see Ellis's 'tall, gaunt figure stealing along the streets of Madrid, a smile on his lips, his eyes lost in that waking dream of born observers, in which the mind is at rest but the instinct is alert and watching.' [1] Like perfumed memories, his sentences recover Santa Maria del Mar, the church of the people in Barcelona, the gardens of Granada and Seville in spring. Interested in architecture as much as in dancing, the two fundamental arts, he sketches care-

[1] Salvador de Madariaga: *The Genius of Spain*, 48.

fully Seville Cathedral, where he spent scores of hours, in the morning, afternoon and night. But the climax of his Spanish experiences, as of his book about Spain, was the visit to Montserrat, in May, 1906, after many years of anticipation. Without difficulty he accepted that 'vaster and more gracious Gibraltar' as a favorite shrine of Our Lady and the home of the Holy Grail. Being something of a monk himself, he was thoroughly at home in a little whitewashed cell adjoining the monastery, and those days of 'calm exhilaration' in the clear air of the mountain and the rich gloom of the church count among the finest of his life.[1] Reverently he attended the celebration of the Mass as the supreme symbol of the soul's adventure, the cleansing spectacle more enduring than mitre or dogma. 'In this atmosphere of mellowed spiritual exaltation one's blood blends insensibly and harmoniously with that of the unceasing company of human souls which for more than a thousand years has climbed up to pray in this mountain. Here at last the pilgrimage of Montserrat is accomplished.'[2]

A cursory reader of *The Soul of Spain* may find the chapters on painting the least effective, convinced that there, for once at least, Ellis lost his close, immediate grip on his subject-matter, and gave way to conventional 'literary' comments. Did too much time spent in galleries, too much note-taking and too much historical knowledge cloud Ellis's vision and impair his sense of plastic values? No; a more careful reading of these chapters shows that he is exceedingly sensitive to light, shade, color and design in painting, although he did not point out those elements emphatically,

[1] Cf. 'Unchanging Spain,' by Havelock Ellis, in *The Nation* (New York) Feb. 16, 1927.

[2] *The Soul of Spain*, 379.

apart from associated values, and, of course, he did not employ the fashionable vocabulary of present-day criticism. It is true that he did not place El Greco among painters of the first order, but he appreciated El Greco's general significance and maintained that 'his colouring was his greatest and best discovery'; this was nearly thirty years ago, and before Meier-Graefe's Spanish journey which led to El Greco's popular reputation. It is true, on the other hand, that Ellis gave an unusually high rank to the crude and often bombastic work of Ribera, but he gave intelligible reasons for that judgment. And, as might be expected, Ellis studied every aspect of the many-sided Velasquez, whose uncompromising naturalism attained 'the dignity of complete realisation,' without the tricks of reckless distortion or the prose of simple representation. Recently the illustrator, Walter Tittle, had an opportunity to discuss these matters with Ellis while making a drawing of him. Afterwards Tittle wrote: 'I found his knowledge of painting and sculpture to be far beyond that of the majority of men who devote their lives to the practice of these arts. We ranged with fair thoroughness through all of the schools of painting and my wonder increased at his grasp of the subject.' [1]

During 1900 and 1901 Ellis was chiefly occupied with *A Study of British Genius*, which was published in the *Popular Science Monthly* in 1901 and in book form three years later. His interest in the problem of genius began, it will be recalled, when he was working on the allied problem of the criminal and revolted against the excessively pathological interpretations of the Italian school, headed by Lombroso. On the other hand, he could not accept entirely the statistical,

[1] Cf. Walter Tittle: 'Two Portraits of Havelock Ellis,' *New York Herald-Tribune*, Jan. 16, 1927.

anthropological attitude of Galton, for whom genius was essentially a normal deviation from the average. Consequently, he had taken up by 1890 his characteristic mediating position, from which he would make conservative use of numerical generalizations and at the same time consider genius a mental anomaly, dissociated from insanity. 'My method of approaching the group corresponds, so far as the data allow, with that which in France Dr. Toulouse adopted so brilliantly and thoroughly (notably in his study of Zola), in approaching the individual man of genius.' Zola, at the age of fifty-six, not only gave Toulouse details of his early development and habits of work, but underwent various tests, all of which were included in a unique study, later followed by a volume on the mathematician Poincaré, who also placed himself at the psychologist's disposal.

Ellis based his work on the accounts of one thousand and thirty persons of preëminent intellectual ability, selected from the sixty-six volumes of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, finished in 1900. Owing to defects of the *Dictionary*, he was compelled to consult over three hundred special biographies and numerous other sources of information, including the National Portrait Gallery. Finally, he had to subject this mass of information to crude statistical analysis, a severe task for one with no fondness for mathematics. He still recalls weary hours spent over the calculations, on some bench in the Luxembourg Gardens, near which he was then living. 'The preparation of this book was indeed more laborious than any other work I have ever undertaken.'

A Study of British Genius generalizes in an interesting way on the nationality and racial affiliations of British geniuses, their geographical distribution, heredity, de-

velopment, and physiological and psychological characteristics. But it is a popular rather than a technical work and has by no means the standing, among scholars, of Ellis's sex studies. For example, E. L. Thorndike and L. M. Terman have no great confidence in his conclusions and would not think of ranking him with J. M. Cattell as a statistical investigator in the field of genius. E. M. East doubts whether Ellis 'ever knew enough of statistical theory to pass a first course examination,' [1] and this doubt is probably not far from the truth. In his book Ellis hit on many ingenious points, but he was inclined to overstrain his figures, as in his emphasis on the differences between the Scotch and the Irish, and the geographical 'foci' of different kinds of ability.[2] In explanations involving the ancient dilemma of congenital traits *versus* environmental influences, Ellis always stressed the former, in the faith that the superior person attains his superior ends under almost any set of circumstances, and is not dependent on a few benevolent accidents.

It would be impertinent to say that Ellis deliberately painted his own portrait between the lines of an objective book on British genius, but inevitably he made statements that applied peculiarly to himself. His ancestral county, for instance, was Suffolk in East Anglia, and he wrote: 'The East Anglian is in scientific matters drawn to the concrete, and shows little or no mathematical aptitude. He is a natural historian in the widest sense. He delights in the patient collection of facts, and seeks to sift, describe, coördinate and classify them. In his hands science becomes almost an art. Gilbert illustrates East Anglian scientific

[1] E. M. East: 'Havelock Ellis — Interpreter,' *Birth Control Review*, Feb., 1927.

[2] Cf. E. L. Thorndike: *Educational Psychology*, III, 219–20.

methods in the inorganic world, Ray in the organic, and Francis Bacon, though he cannot himself be classed among men of science, has in the *Novum Organum*, and elsewhere presented a picture of scientific method as it most naturally appears to the East Anglian mind.' [1] Thus Ellis might have described, with perfect accuracy, the empirical method which he himself employed in his work on sex.

He also noted that men of intellectual ability are frequently eldest children, profit from prolonged residence abroad in early life, have high-pitched voices and display lack of muscular coördination. Many of them suffer from extreme shyness, bashfulness or timidity, which is not necessarily connected with lack of courage. 'It causes a distaste for social contact and so favours those forms of activity which may be exerted in solitude, these latter, again, reacting to produce awkwardness in social relations. Moreover, the mental state of timidity, which may be regarded as a mild form of *folie de doute*, a perpetual self-questioning and uncertainty, however unpleasant it may be from the social point of view, is by no means an unsatisfactory attitude in the face of intellectual problems, for it involves that unceasing criticism which is an essential of all good intellectual work, and has marked more or less clearly the greatest men of scientific genius. Fundamentally, no doubt, timidity is a minor congenital defect of the nervous system, fairly comparable to stammering.' [2]

After finishing the book on genius, Ellis dashed off in some odd moments a brilliant and caustic 'open letter to biographers,' with whom he had been spending so much time for several years. He told them that

[1] *A Study of British Genius*, 60, new ed.

[2] *Ibid.*, 198, new ed.

their biographies were often merely 'slices of misplaced history' and that usually they omitted some of the most crucial biological facts. 'After the age of twenty your task becomes easier and more obvious; after thirty, if so far you have fulfilled that task, what is there further left to tell? The rest is but the liberation of a mighty spring, the slow running down of energy. The man recedes to give place to his deeds, whether such deeds be the assault of great fortresses or the escalade of mighty sentences. There is the same heroic effort and achievement, whether on the walls of Jerusalem when Godfrey scaled them or on Flaubert's sofa at Rouen.' A biography, Ellis went on to say, should not be a simple chronicle of scandal, but it should contain a fair presentation of the hero's weaknesses, which are the keys, ordinarily, to his strength. 'It corrupts the tree of life at the core to deny such associations, to point only to the leaves and flowers that men call "moral," to ignore the roots which — through your hypocrisy, it may well be — they call dirty and "immoral." Nothing shall induce you to admit that your Achilles had a vulnerable heel! — And yet, if you rightly consider the matter, without that heel Achilles would have been no hero at all.' In conclusion, Ellis dwelt on the profound difficulties of the art of biography, which are scarcely imagined by those who turn out their volumes so quickly and easily. In no other form of literature has Ellis been so much interested, and by no other form has he been so much disappointed. But having written his thirty-five-hundred-word 'open letter,' he had no special desire to publish it, and it did not appear until 1926, in the appendix of Dr. Goldberg's 'biographical and critical study.'

After 1900 Mrs. Ellis's chronic illness prevented her from accompanying her husband on many of his trips

to the Continent, but in the spring of 1903 they went for her health to the baths of Savoy. In that lovely country for the first time, he roamed delightedly, studying its old buildings and the people who blend so intimately with their soil. At Chambéry he did not know how to find traces of Casanova, but he went step by step through 'Les Charmettes,' that modest farm-house where Rousseau spent with Madame de Warens those few untroubled years out of which grew much of the emotional wealth of the modern world. Like Morley before him, Ellis was penetrated by the peace, beauty and silence of the place, by its 'pitiful melancholy,' and in consequence began to study seriously for the first time the baffling figure who usually inspires either idolatry or rage. That very antithesis Ellis set out to reconcile a few years later in one of his most concentrated studies, 'Rousseau To-Day,' for which he absorbed the bulk of Rousseau's writings as well as the principal efforts of the critics. He traced the great lines of his influence, as reactionary in its indifference to reason, but wonderfully liberating in religion, love and our feeling for nature. 'To view Rousseau rightly, we must see him, on the one hand, as the essential instrument of genius, a reed stirred to magnificent music by all the mighty winds of the spirit; and, on the other hand, as a much-suffering man, scourged more than most men by human frailties, and yet forever struggling to aspire. In this double capacity, at once type of genius and of humanity, we learn to understand something of the magic of Rousseau's influence; we learn to understand how it is that before this shrine the most unlike persons in the world — the Marquis de Sade as well as Emerson, Charlotte Corday as well as Immanuel Kant — have alike bowed in reverence.' [1]

[1] 'Rousseau To-Day,' in *The Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1912.

Like most of Ellis's essays, that on Rousseau is crowded with thought and information, yet so plausible, simple, obvious, that it would be easily passed over for a more sensational piece of writing, glowing with aphoristic errors. Rousseau, particularly, has been the object of much rhetorical melodrama, but very little balanced, unpretentious criticism. Ellis originally intended that essay for a volume with some such title as *From Rousseau (or Marivaux) to Gourmont*, to be published in 1912, the two hundredth anniversary of Rousseau's birth, but he could not get it ready in time. He still hopes to bring out a volume of his French studies, including those on Madame de Warens, Eugène Carrière and Henri de Régnier.

Of much more value to Ellis than his fresh appreciation of Rousseau was his discovery, at this period, of the contemporary French philosopher, Jules de Gaultier, whom he has considered 'the most subtle and original of living thinkers.' Born in 1858, of Parisian parents, Gaultier has devoted his life to speculation, contributed for more than thirty years to leading periodicals and produced a dozen notable volumes, which, curiously enough, are little known outside of his native country. Chiefly influenced by Schopenhauer, he later found himself in deep sympathy with Nietzsche. In 1892 he published a brochure on *La Psychologie dans l'Œuvre de Flaubert*, in which he defined as *Bovarism* ('Bovarysme') the morbid tendency of Flaubert's characters 'to conceive themselves as other than they are.' But in the succeeding decade he showed that *Bovaryism* was a universal principle, characteristic of all consciousness and necessary to all progress. In the midst of endless becoming, to know things means to know them other than they are. 'Every expression distorts — at the same time that it evokes, its object.

Every word is a metaphor, a frozen signal, a crude equivalent of an unstable and fleeting reality, which escapes incessantly and inevitably from the embrace of the present.' The idea of truth is man's grandest illusion. He moves through worlds he does not apprehend by means of fictions he does not suspect.

In recent years we have realized more and more that the human mind, 'umbilical to earth,' is not primarily a truth-reflecting mirror. It has appeared since Darwin as a useful instrument of adjustment, brought into existence by natural selection. Nietzsche learned to scoff at truth as a 'moral prejudice' and gloried in the life-giving quality of illusions. Ibsen disclosed in dramas the value of 'vital lies.' The pragmatists, insisting on the fluidity of meaning, tested beliefs by their practical efficacy. The psychoanalysts uncovered the mechanisms of fantasy and rationalization, which tie men fatally to their falsifying desires. Vaihinger, after a delay of nearly forty years, published in 1911, his *Die Philosophie des Als Ob*, which exhibited man in every realm of experience, acting *as if* certain things were true, from the fantastic concepts of mathematics and physics, to the impossible axioms of ethics and law. It is the business of intelligence to indulge in 'expedient errors.' More radically, more completely than any of these thinkers, Gaultier has sought to undermine the naïve notion of truth and substitute a theory of universal fiction.

In 1902 he sent to Ellis, at Remy de Gourmont's suggestion, a copy of the expanded version of *Le Bovarysme*. Ellis 'glanced through it with but faint interest and threw it aside,' offended by 'the awkward and ill-chosen title.' But it had sunk in his mind, and late in the following year, when living on the Île de France, he was pleased to receive Gaultier's next book,

La Fiction Universelle, which he reviewed for *The Weekly Critical Review*, a short-lived journal written in English and French, and published in Paris. After a brief comment on Gaultier's first book, Ellis continued: 'Having realised the narrow and imperfect character of his early view of Bovaryism, and the immensely increased range and significance which it possessed when fertilised by Nietzschean ideas, M. de Gaultier's next task was to re-write and enlarge his early study of *Le Bovarysme*, which accordingly appeared last year under the publications of the *Mercure de France*. Here Bovaryism, no longer regarded as simply the method whereby a great artist showed the course of human failure in life, assumed its full development as the universal process by which men not only fall but also rise, by fashioning themselves to the model of their conceptions, the process indeed by which whole communities and civilisations evolve the conceptions which are life-giving, and when they no longer subserve life replace them by others. Bovaryism thus became an original view of the whole process of evolution.'

In ultimate philosophical matters Ellis had long been a sceptic. He thought of metaphysics as an art by which a few refined intellects express their vision of the universe, not as a science which reveals the true nature of things. In *The New Spirit* he had written: 'Every man who has reached the stage of development in which he can truly experience the joy of the philosophic emotion will construct his own philosophy. A philosophy is the house of the mind, and no two philosophies will be alike because not two minds are alike. But the emotion is the same, the emotion of expansive joy in a house not built with hands, in which the soul has made for herself a large and harmonious dwelling.'

For Gaultier also, philosophy is 'the recital of a personal adventure,' the world seen through a temperament. 'Truth,' he has said, 'is a machine of war. Thundering in the sanctuary of all religions, sæcular or revealed, it is the source of fanaticism and combat.' Gaultier confirmed Ellis in his scepticism, and at the same time gave it a more systematic form.

A similar satisfaction Ellis found in Vaihinger's book which he discovered soon after its publication, and his later account of it was the first to appear in English outside of technical journals.[1] This account became the nucleus for the popular chapter on 'The Art of Thinking' in *The Dance of Life*. 'We can only regard reality as a Heraclitean flux of happenings — though Vaihinger fails to point out that this "reality" also can only be an image or a symbol — and our thinking would itself be fluid if it were not that by fiction we obtain imaginary standpoints and boundaries by which to gain control of the flow of reality. It is the special art and object of thinking to attain existence by quite other methods than that of existence itself. But the wish by so doing to understand the world is both unrealisable and foolish, for we are only trying to comprehend our own fictions. We can never solve the so-called world-riddle because what seem riddles to us are merely the contradictions we have ourselves created.[2]

As the world ceases to be a problem to solve, it becomes a spectacle to contemplate, for it 'can only be justified,' in Nietzsche's words, 'as an æsthetic phenomenon,' and that solid justification is found beautifully elaborated in Gaultier's writings. As there seems to be little certitude in the theological inter-

[1] 'The World as Fiction,' in *The Nation* (London), Oct. 23, 1920.

[2] *The Dance of Life*, 101.

pretation of existence (especially since many investigators have concluded that God is dead), and as scientific progress seems to be another form of the Messianic delusion, we may remember that there is a kind of experience which is complete without being possessive, that we can behold without holding. The monstrous hopes, the furious curiosity, the imprisoning dreams fade away before an infinite horizon demanding the best of our attention. From perpetually agonizing hypotheses we turn to facts immediate in their beauty and invaluable in their blessing. So 'through art the Greek withdrew from the tyranny of illusion and became a spectator on the shores of becoming, where he watched the boats loaded with masks and prizes invented by the madness of Maia, floating down the noisy stream of life.' [1] So 'the joys and the sorrows which fill life are both elements of spectacular interest, and without the mixture of both, that interest would be abolished. To make of the representative worth of phenomena their justification in view of a spectacular end alone, avoids the objection by which the moral thesis is faced, the fact of pain. Pain becomes on the contrary, the correlative of pleasure, an indispensable means for its realization. Such a thesis is in agreement with the nature of things, instead of being wounded by their existence.' [2]

Such passages in Gaultier appealed to Ellis particularly, as he had also largely substituted the æsthetic for the ethical outlook on life. He has continued to read everything that Gaultier has written and his admiration has grown with the years. Under the date of September 18, 1913, the following note appears in

[1] Jules de Gaultier: *De Kant à Nietzsche*, 303.

[2] Jules de Gaultier: *La Dependance de la Morale et l'Indépendance des Mœurs*, 340; quoted by Ellis in *The Dance of Life*, 278.

the first volume of *Impressions and Comments*: 'For Gaultier the world is a spectacle. We always conceive ourselves other than we are (that is the famous "Bovarism"), we can never know the world as it is. The divine creative principle is Error. All the great dramatists and novelists have unconsciously realised this in the sphere of literature; Flaubert consciously and supremely realised it. In life also the same principle holds. Life is a perpetual risk and danger, the perpetual toss of a die which can never be calculated, a perpetual challenge to high adventure. But it is only in art that the solution of Life's problems can be found. Life is always immoral and unjust. It is Art alone which, rising above the categories of Morality, justifies the pains and griefs of Life by demonstrating their representative character and emphasising their spectacular value, thus redeeming the pain of life by beauty. It is along this path that Jules de Gaultier would lead by the hand those tender and courageous souls who care to follow him.'

In *The Dance of Life* Ellis cited Gaultier twenty-five times and devoted the central part of the 'Conclusion' to an exposition of his 'æsthetic metaphysics,' paraphrasing, by way of climax, a passage from Gaultier's essay, 'La Moralité Esthétique':[1] 'The mother who seeks to soothe her crying child preaches him no sermon. She holds up some bright object and it fixes his attention. He brings the world before us, not on the plane of covetousness and fears and commandments, but on the plane of representation; the world becomes a spectacle. Instead of imitating those philosophers who with analyses and syntheses worry over the goal of life, and the justification of the world, and the meaning of the strange and painful phenom-

[1] *Mercure de France*, Dec. 15, 1921.

enon called Existence, the artist takes up some fragment of that existence, transfigures it, shows it: There! And therewith the spectator is filled with enthusiastic joy, and the transcendent Adventure of Existence is justified. Every great artist, a Dante or a Shakespeare, a Dostoievsky or a Proust, thus furnishes the metaphysical justification of existence by the beauty of the vision he presents of the cruelty and horror of existence. All the pain and the madness, even the ugliness and the commonplace of the world, he converts into shining jewels. By revealing the spectacular character of reality he restores the serenity of its innocence.' [1]

In our ability to see the World as a Spectacle, so grandly painted in the Book of Revelation, Ellis finds the best road of escape from sordidness, injustice, intolerance, imbecility and even monotony. Yet Ellis would always hasten to say that if one is 'only able to enjoy the absurdity of the world as a Spectacle, or if he is merely occupied in solemnly striving to mould and cement it by Reason, he is, in either case, a good half-man, but only a half-man. How to be at the same time both? I have always been preoccupied with this problem. For only the rarest great spirits have achieved it, Rabelais, Goethe, possibly Shakespeare had he lived longer. To be the serene spectator of the Absurdity of the world, to be at the same time the strenuous worker in the Rationalisation of the world — that is the function of the complete Man. But it remains a very difficult task, the supreme task in the Art of Living.' [2]

[1] *The Dance of Life*, 348–49.

[2] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 100.

CHAPTER XV

THE FINISHED TASK

YEAR after year Ellis went on trying to shed a little reasonable light on the absurd and tragic facts of man's sexual life. Almost invariably he published portions of his studies in magazines some time before rewriting them, for inclusion in one of the volumes. In 1903 the Davis Company brought out Volume III, containing a judicious analysis of the sexual impulse, without any pretension of novelty or originality, although it contained a modification of Moll's generally accepted view; 'Love and Pain,' the phenomena of sadism and masochism; and an elaborate essay on the sexual impulse in women. In the appendix is a discussion of the sexual instinct in savages; contrary to the common assumption (largely rooted in contempt and envy), that savages are continually engaged in sexual orgies, Ellis asserts with Lucretius that 'the sexual instinct has increased rather than diminished with the growth of civilization.' The strenuous life and numerous taboos of the savages make intercourse impossible at many periods, and otherwise their sexual impulse seems to be weaker, more spasmodic and less easily aroused than that of their relatives in advanced stages of culture.[1] To which Ellis adds: 'Foolish and ignorant persons may deplore the full development which the sexual instinct has reached in civilized man; to a finer insight that development is seen to be indissolubly linked with all that is most poignant and most difficult, indeed, but also all that is best, in human life as we know it.'

[1] Some writers differ sharply with Ellis in these conclusions; the problem will probably have its best statement in Bronislaw Malinowski's forthcoming book, *Sexual Life of Savages.*

Volume IV of the *Studies*, published in 1905, treats, in a tentative way, the psychological aspects of sexual selection, the complicated subject opened by Darwin in the second part of *The Descent of Man*. Volume V, brought out in the following year, opens with a study of *erotic symbolism* by which Ellis means the lover's tendency to be 'diverted from the central focus of sexual attraction to some object or process which is on the periphery of that focus, or is even outside of it altogether, though recalling it by association of contiguity or of similarity.' It covers almost the entire range of aberrations from shoe and foot fetichism and the idealization of deformities, to coprolagnia and bestiality. There is no one who does not share, to a degree, in some of these peculiarities, as the most ethereal expressions of love, and what are considered the basest, spring from similar mental mechanisms. While a poet exalts his lady's hands or eyes in a charming lyric which wins popular applause, his less fortunate brother may achieve complete disgrace by falling in love with a slipper or reverting to phallus-worship.

'A man cannot deviate,' says Ellis, 'at once so widely and so spontaneously from the rest of the world in which he himself lives without possessing an aboriginally abnormal temperament. At the very least he exhibits a neuropathic sensitiveness to abnormal impressions. Not infrequently there is more than this, the distinct stigmata of degeneration, sometimes a certain degree of congenital feeble-mindedness or a tendency to insanity.

'Yet, regarded as a whole, and notwithstanding the frequency with which they witness to congenital morbidity, the phenomena of erotic symbolism can scarcely fail to be profoundly impressive to the patient and impartial student of the human soul. They

often seem absurd, sometimes disgusting, occasionally criminal; they are always, when carried to an extreme, abnormal. But of all the manifestations of sexual psychology, normal and abnormal, they are the most specifically human. More than any other they involve the potently plastic forces of the imagination. They bring before us the individual man, not only apart from his fellows, but in opposition, himself creating his own paradise. They constitute the supreme triumph of human idealism.'

With this genius for tolerance, with this ability to see beyond the bounds of narrow categories, Ellis brought to his writings the disinterested calm of Nature and set a style for sexologists to imitate. He not only covered a vast literature and corresponded with leading specialists, but gathered in his own way a large number of new cases. His work would not have been possible without the assistance of collaborators throughout the world, especially refined and intelligent women, who furnished him with intimate personal records and freely answered his questions. Scores of people have brought their troubles to him, and without any definite technique he has helped them to a condition of liberation and peace, which is the object of psychoanalytic treatment. Some of them who have been rescued from the very edge of insanity or death consider Ellis the supreme 'psychoanalyst.' These relationships were entirely on a friendly basis and involved the payment of no fees by the patients.

Typical of Ellis's cases was that of 'Florrie' who read some of his studies and consequently came to him for personal advice. A robust literary woman of thirty-seven, she had long been sexually abnormal and obsessed with the subject of whipping. In an attitude of complete sympathy, but without making positive

suggestions which might have put her on the defensive (a danger of the psychoanalytic method), he allowed her to unravel her own past, to trace her condition back to concrete circumstances of her childhood and youth. During three years there were numerous interviews and he received from her some sixty written communications. In this 'atmosphere of sympathetic comprehension' she came to understand herself, drew away from her old morbid interests and at last notified him that 'Florrie' was dead.

In a lengthy article, 'The Mechanism of Sexual Deviation,' Ellis has recorded 'Florrie's' history.[1] He hesitates to speak of his *method* and will not use a term with such gross connotations as 'treatment.' 'It became a process of mental analysis. But it was Florrie herself who mainly carried on that analysis, and therein its virtue lay. . . . Florrie's course towards normality, however devious, was as inevitable and as absolutely natural as her course towards abnormality.' 'It is necessary to go further and to cast doubts even on more discerning methods when they are based on routine and on the subconscious belief that every case must conform to the same pattern. Such a method is pernicious and unlikely to lead to success even when it is the outcome of a genuine analytic investigation. Every human being presents, as every fine work of art presents, a continual slight novelty. There must always be a tendency to a pattern, but the pattern is never quite the same, and it is puerile to insist on trying to make it so. Each new person is a fresh revelation of Nature, to be watched, quietly and patiently, until its secret is manifested. We cannot rule Nature, as Bacon long ago declared, except by obeying her. And we

[1] *The Psychoanalytic Review*, July, Oct., 1919; to be included in Volume VII of the *Studies*.

cannot guide the struggling human being on his course unless we realize what that course is and possess the faith and the insight to discern the meaning of even its most unexpected deviations on the upward path. Even the leading question must often be regarded as almost an outrage, and still more the insistent demand on the patient to admit impulses which some theory demands. There are times when it is desirable to let fall a suggestion of what the observer divines, but it must be let fall easily, as it were casually, as lightly as a rose petal. It will not fail to hit the mark if the divination was sound, even though, at the moment, there is no response.'

Working in this frame of mind, Ellis has avoided the various orthodoxies of modern psychology and the more dogmatic tendencies in all science. Nevertheless, or perhaps for that very reason, he is looked on condescendingly by many members of the medical fraternity and professors of the academy. He has been a brilliant and bold pioneer, they say, but after all he is an amateur, a literary psychologist, with no real scientific background or method. He has been a member of no faculty, delivered no lectures, sat in no office, and acknowledged no disciples. How could such a man be a 'scientific psychologist'? The only reply is that Ellis underwent a sound medical training, kept in close touch with developments in medicine and psychology, studied numerous patients in his own way, and exhibited far more restraint in his conclusions than is customary among psychologists. And who else has covered the field of sex so *critically*?

In 1906 Ellis wrote of August Forel's *Die Sexuelle Frage* (*The Sexual Question*): 'It is without doubt the most comprehensive, and taking into account its many-sidedness, perhaps the ablest work which has

yet appeared on the sex question.'[1] The following year Ellis said of the much more important book by Iwan Bloch, *Das Sexualleben unserer Zeit* (*The Sexual Life of Our Time*): 'The author has written a weighty, learned, comprehensive and even brilliant treatise, which cannot fail to be helpful even to those who have given most study to the subjects here discussed. Is it too much to hope that the book will some day be translated into English?' On Ellis's suggestion it was soon translated into English by Eden and Cedar Paul, and became more accessible to the general public than Ellis's own work.

In general aim and achievement Bloch resembled Ellis probably more than any other writer on the Continent. But Bloch (1872–1922) was much the younger and drew a great deal on Ellis, both in matters of detail and in leading principles, as one may readily see in *The Sexual Life of Our Time*, which appeared after the first five volumes of Ellis's series were published. He was especially strong on the scholarly side and developed various branches of the subject much more than Ellis ever did. They were in frequent correspondence and met once, when Bloch was in London. Ellis found him an attractive and sympathetic personality, and thought his too early death a great loss to science.

Another prominent German authority is Albert Moll, who remarked in 1909, in *The Sexual Life of Children*: 'Havelock Ellis is, in my opinion, the leader of all those at present engaged in the study of sexual psychology. Unfortunately his writings are not so well known in Germany as they deserve to be, the reason being that owing to their strictly scientific character they are not so noisily obtruded on the public notice as

[1] *The Journal of Mental Science*, April, 1906.

are certain other widely advertised and reputedly scientific works.'

From 1906 until 1909 Ellis worked chiefly on *Sex in Relation to Society*, the sixth and final volume of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. When asked what parts, sections or analyses of the entire work he considered most important, he replied: 'Undoubtedly Volume VI. Not only does it deal with the aspects that are of the most general importance, but, unlike the earlier volumes which are carefully impartial and impersonal, it indicates my personal directions.' He had deliberately steered clear of sweeping hypotheses and premature speculation in order to summarize and evaluate the most reliable evidence on the whole subject of sex. He had steered clear of *originality*, although that term may be applied to his synthetic survey, which was more extensive and judicious than any previously made. He had 'dealt mainly with the sex impulse in relation to its object, leaving out of account the external persons and the environmental influences which yet may powerfully affect that impulse and its gratification.' It now devolved upon him to discuss the 'relationship of the sexual impulse to third persons and to the community at large with all its anciently established traditions.' And in order to do this, he was led to express preferences, to state his own point of view, in a book of great wisdom, courage and beauty.

It contains six hundred and forty-five pages, divided into twelve chapters:

I. The Mother and Her Child.
II. Sexual Education.
III. Sexual Education and Nakedness.
IV. The Valuation of Sexual Love.
V. The Function of Chastity.

VI. The Problem of Sexual Abstinence.
VII. Prostitution.
VIII. The Conquest of the Venereal Diseases.
IX. Sexual Morality.
X. Marriage.
XI. The Art of Love.
XII. The Science of Procreation.

Society is a totality of individuals dependent on traditions, and the individual is a meaningless abstraction without society. They are not material for a dilemma or antithesis, but complementary parts of a more or less stable equilibrium. It is always a question of changing color and emphasis, not of any fixed final solution. These axioms Ellis has long taken for granted and illustrated elaborately in his writings. When he speaks of man's 'natural' impulses, he assumes that man is 'naturally' a social animal and regards that as a recognized, obvious fact. Rather than oppose individualism and socialism to one another, he believes that there is a perfect division of labor between them. 'We have only to remember that the field of each is distinct. No one needs Individualism in his water supply, and no one needs Socialism in his religion.' [1] Similarly, in the field of sex, there are distinctions to be made which would cut down somewhat the duty of everybody to interfere with everybody else's erotic life.

According to Ellis, 'Sexual union, for a woman as much as for a man, is a physiological fact; it may also be a spiritual fact; but it is not a social act. It is, on the contrary, an act which, beyond all other acts, demands retirement and mystery for its accomplishment. That indeed is a general human, almost zoological, fact. Moreover, this demand of mystery is more especially made by woman in virtue of her greater modesty which, we have found reason to be-

[1] *The Task of Social Hygiene*, 394.

lieve, has a biological basis. It is not until a child is born or conceived that the community has any right to interest itself in the sexual acts of its members. The sexual act is of no more concern to the community than any other private physiological act. It is an impertinence, if not an outrage, to seek to inquire into it. But the birth of a child is a social act. Not what goes into the womb but what comes out of it concerns society. The community is invited to receive a new citizen. It is entitled to demand that the citizen shall be worthy of a place in its midst and that he shall be properly introduced by a responsible father and a responsible mother. The whole of sexual morality, as Ellen Key has said, revolves round the child.' [1]

This passage was recently made the point of departure for a typical academic attack on Ellis. An American sociologist, C. W. Margold, in *Sex Freedom and Social Control*, a book of one hundred short pages and two hundred and twenty-seven footnotes, succeeded in showing that social control has always been present in man's sexual conduct, particularly among the American Indians, central Africans and Melanesians. The information, however, is not very helpful, for the ethical issue is not the existence of social control (a fact hardly worth laboring), but *how far* such control should extend. Ellis has always maintained that the social influence is so strong that *there is far more need to react against it than to reënforce it.*[2] We are too much ab-

[1] *Sex in Relation to Society*, 417.

[2] Margold writes as if Ellis were totally blind to the social factor. Malinowski, the distinguished anthropologist, calls himself 'a pupil and follower of Havelock Ellis,' and says of Ellis's *Studies*: 'In that work the biological nature of the regulation of the sexual instinct under culture is never lost sight of, and the parallel between animal and human societies is used as an important principle of explanation.' (*Sex and Repressions in Savage Society*, 193.) Edward Westermarck, the author of *The History of Human Marriage* and *The Origin and Growth of Moral Ideas*, considers

sorbed in the melodrama of adultery and not enough in the science of procreation.

First of all, then, Ellis insisted that the social emphasis must be placed on the care of the child, not only after birth but in the pre-natal period. Elaborate education later can never make up for early months of neglect. As the race itself may be the object of a religion, its most sacred symbol is the pregnant mother requiring perfect attention. Yet these measures have only to do with improving the conditions of life, with purifying the banks of the stream, and the next logical step leads back to the source of that stream, to 'a deliberate control of life itself.' Man would thus have an ultimate hand in his own destiny and by his prerogative of foresight give a human meaning to the quantitative act that he shares with all the animals. Rather than spawn indiscriminately he would bring children into the world in accordance with his desire for them and his fitness to have them. When there were only eight people on the face of the earth, God wisely advised them to increase and multiply, but that advice is no longer quite so pertinent. At the present rate of increase, general overpopulation will be inevitable within a few centuries, and meanwhile population pressure will contribute to more wars. But that pressure can be relieved by intelligent means, and the unfit, physically and mentally, can be deterred from reproducing without losing all the benefits of marriage. There can also be saved thousands of women for whom pregnancy, or too frequent pregnancies, means death; and those parents who are only capable or desirous of rearing small families need not be burdened with large

Ellis's work in a class by itself: 'The thoroughly scientific spirit in which it is written, the acute and well-balanced judgment of its author, and his vast knowledge make it a classic without a rival.' (From a personal letter, Aug. 14, 1927.)

ones. All this may be considered *unnatural* (if the word means anything), but so is every effort of man to combat or improve his environment.

These convictions Ellis acquired before he was seventeen, in consequence of reading George Drysdale's impressive book, *The Elements of Social Science*, and they were deepened by his medical training, obstetrical work in the London slums, a profound knowledge of sex psychology and the statistical study of population in connection with genius. But there was no occasion to express himself positively on this question until he came to the relevant chapter in Volume VI of the *Studies*. In two articles, 'Are the Anglo-Saxon Dying Out?' and 'The Future of the Anglo-Saxon,' published in 1903 and 1904 respectively, he had already exposed certain crude fallacies of the preachers, demagogues and militarists who prate of 'race-suicide,' by showing that a high birth rate is invariably associated with a high death rate and unfavorable living conditions, whereas a decrease of the birth rate is characteristic of the higher animals and every advanced civilization. The tremendous rise of the total population of the western world during the past hundred and thirty years was not at all typical of human history, but was a sudden and unforeseen result of the Industrial Revolution combining accidentally with the humanitarian movement, improved sanitation and new medical knowledge. Far from being under moral obligations to continue that orgy of reproduction, we are called upon to suspend it, in order to improve the quality of the race, which is the object of eugenics. That can be done when the masses of unfit are allowed to have the knowledge of contraception which is now so generally used by the superior few. 'Only by the regulation, limitation, and, if necessary,

prevention of conception, in the light of our gradually increasing knowledge of heredity, can we hope to raise satisfactorily the general level of the race.' [1] Again and again Ellis has insisted that birth control is the only practical instrument by which eugenics can work. As for the use of birth control outside of marriage, what it undoubtedly does, according to Dunlap, 'is to reduce markedly the cases of abortion, infanticide, and suicide, and the number of irretrievably wrecked girls' lives.' [2]

With increasing emphasis, at times with a violence rare in him, Ellis has dwelt on the tragic importance of the population problem and its fundamental solution. Ten weeks before the outbreak of the World War he wrote in his notebook: 'It sometimes seems to me that one may regard a man's attitude toward the movement of the birth rate as a test of his relationship to Nature, and a criterion of his right to live in the world. There is nothing so natural as natality, nothing that is so intimately connected with the physical and psychic mystery of life. The man who places himself in opposition to its manifestations is a disturbing clog in the mechanism of the world's wheels. At the present moment all the great live communities of men all over the world are concerned in regulating and ordering more reasonably, if not more eugenically, the output of babies which once was left, not to Nature, which is Order, but to the fate of Chance, which is Disorder. Civilisation is bound up with the success of that movement. The man who rejoices in it and strives to further it is alive; the man who shudders and raises impotent hands against it is merely dead, even though the grave yet yawns for him in vain.' [3]

[1] Havelock Ellis: *The Philosophy of Conflict*, 133–34.
[2] Knight Dunlap: *Social Psychology*, 189.
[3] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 19–20.

In spite of these passionate convictions Ellis would not dream of invoking for his cherished eugenic ideals the mighty forces of the law. 'For legislation can only demand actions that are both generalised and externalized, and the demands of the regeneration of the race must be both particularised and internalised, or they are meaningless and even void. . . . We have to be on our guard — and that is our final problem — lest our efforts for the regeneration of the race lead us to a mechanical and materialistic conception of life regulated by codes and statutes and adjudicated in law courts. Better an unregenerate life than such a regeneration! For freedom is the breath of life, joy is the prime tonic of life, and no regeneration is worth striving for which fails to increase the total sum of freedom and of joy. Those who are working for racial regeneration must make this very clear, or they discredit their own aims.' [1]

This is also Ellis's attitude in the matter of prostitution and the law. He agrees with Herbert Spencer that we can only alleviate social evils by working outside and around them, in contrast to the crude frontal attacks of ordinary reformers. The blind efforts of the police simply drive prostitution underground and cast suspicion on innocent people. Prostitution in its present form will tend to disappear with refinement from within and the development of more elastic unions than marriage. 'So long as we are incapable of such methods,' says Ellis, 'we must be content with the prostitution we deserve, learning to treat it with the pity and the respect which so intimate a failure of our civilization is entitled to.' [2]

[1] *The Problem of Race-Regeneration*, 70.

[2] *Sex in Relation to Society*, 318; cf. *The Task of Social Hygiene*, chap. IX.

Assuming well-born children, Ellis saw that the next important step was the adequate education of those children along biological lines, not omitting the reproductive facts of life. Accustomed from the beginning to the sight of the naked human body, it will never be for them a horrible and criminal mystery, as clothes will never be the flimsy bulwark of virtue.[1] Physical and mental hygiene will revolve around a true understanding of nakedness and become the natural basis of purity. Beyond the education of children lies the exquisite art of love which, in the western world, has usually been left to the rampages of that infallible teacher known as 'instinct.' Under the guidance of instinct, the average lover resembles the orang-utan trying to play the violin, as Balzac pointed out. Wives are ruined physically and mentally by the awkward stupidity of husbands, and husbands are driven to prostitutes by the chaste ignorance of wives. It was for such a world that Ellis wrote his superb chapter on 'the art of love,' the high point of all the *Studies*.

Sex in Relation to Society is a fusion of science and poetry that no other moralist or sexologist has been

[1] Dr. Maurice Parmelee has recently written a book, *The New Gymnosophy*, describing the German 'Nacktkultur' movement, 'which advocates the practice of nudity by both sexes in common for hygienic, social and æsthetic reasons.' In an introduction to this book (not yet published) Ellis remarks: 'I have not myself the slightest intention of following Dr. Parmelee's example in joining any of the societies for the practice in common of the principles of gymnosophy. I am pleased that such societies exist; I can see that they perform a valuable function. Personally, however, I am well content to continue to follow an old practice of simply encouraging the practice of nakedness privately and among personal friends. I find, increasingly, that that is what others also are doing, on simple hygienic, moral, or æsthetic grounds, for themselves and their children. . . . By a careful comparison of the average weight and length of women's garments to-day as compared with even ten years ago, it requires but little arithmetical skill to calculate the precise date at which, other things being equal, there will be nothing left. Needless to add, other things will not be equal; but that is a consideration we need not here discuss.'

able to achieve. It is a serene and consoling conclusion to a long and difficult investigation, often through the darkest caverns of existence. Perhaps the earlier volumes are chiefly needed by 'medical and legal minds,' but this one at least should no longer be withheld from a public which feeds on the cheap writings of excited reformers and avaricious quacks.

In the fall of 1875, young Henry Havelock Ellis, in Australia, dedicated himself to the study of sex. In the fall of 1909, at Cornwall, he finished the last chapter of his epic and wrote, with a deep sigh of relief, a final Postscript:

"The work that I was born to do is done," a great poet wrote when at last he had completed his task. And although I am not entitled to sing any Nunc dimittis, I am well aware that the task that has occupied the best part of my life can have left few years and little strength for any work that comes after. It is more than thirty years ago since the first resolve to write the work now here concluded began to shape itself, still dimly though insistently; the period of study and preparation occupied over fifteen years, ending with the publication of *Man and Woman*, put forward as a prolegomenon to the main work which, in the writing and publication, has occupied the fifteen subsequent years.

'It was perhaps fortunate for my peace that I failed at the outset to foresee all the perils that beset my path. I knew indeed that those who investigate severely and intimately any subject which men are accustomed to pass by on the other side lay themselves open to misunderstanding and even obloquy. But I supposed that a secluded student who approached vital social problems with precaution, making no direct appeal to the general public, but only to the public's

teachers, and who wrapped up the results of his inquiries in technically written volumes open to few, I supposed that such a student was at all events secure from any gross form of attack on the part of the police or the government under whose protection he imagined that he lived. That proved to be a mistake. When only one volume of these Studies had been written and published in England, a prosecution, instigated by the government, put an end to the sale of that volume in England, and led me to resolve that the subsequent volumes should not be published in my own country. I do not complain. I am grateful for the early and generous sympathy with which my work was received in Germany and the United States, and I recognize that it has had a wider circulation, both in England and the other chief languages of the world, than would have been possible by the modest method of issue which the government of my own country induced me to abandon. Nor has the effort to crush my work resulted in any change in that work by so much as a single word. With help, or without it, I have followed my own path to the end.

'For it so happens that I come on both sides of my house from stocks of Englishmen who, nearly three hundred years ago, had encountered just these same difficulties and dangers before. In the seventeenth century, indeed, the battle was around the problem of religion, as to-day it is around the problem of sex. Since I have of late years realized this analogy I have often thought of certain admirable and obscure men who were driven out, robbed, and persecuted, some by the Church because the spirit of Puritanism moved within them, some by the Puritans because they clung to the ideals of the Church, yet both alike quiet and unflinching, both alike fighting for causes of freedom or

of order in a field which has now for ever been won. That victory has often seemed of good augury to the perhaps degenerate child of these men who has to-day sought to maintain the causes of freedom and of order in another field.

'It sometimes seems, indeed, a hopeless task to move the pressure of inert prejudices which are at no point so obstinate as this of sex. It may help to restore the serenity of our optimism if we would more clearly realize that in a very few generations all these prejudices will have perished and be forgotten. He who follows in the steps of Nature after a law that was not made by man, and is above and beyond man, has time as well as eternity on his side, and can afford to be both patient and fearless. Men die, but the ideas they seek to kill live. Our books may be thrown to the flames, but in the next generation those flames become human souls. The transformation is effected by the doctor in his consulting room, by the teacher in the school, the preacher in the pulpit, the journalist in the press. It is a transformation that is going on, slowly but surely, around us.

'I am well aware that many will not feel able to accept the estimate of the sexual situation as here set forth, more especially in the final volume. Some will consider that estimate too conservative, others too revolutionary. For there are always some who passionately seek to hold fast to the past; there are always others who passionately seek to snatch at what they imagine to be the future. But the wise man, standing midway between both parties and sympathizing with each, knows that we are ever in the stage of transition. The present is in every age merely the shifting point at which past and future meet, and we can have no quarrel with either. There can be no world without

traditions; neither can there be any life without movement. As Heraclitus knew at the outset of modern philosophy, we cannot bathe twice in the same stream, though, as we know to-day, the stream still flows in an unending circle. There is never a moment when the new dawn is not breaking over the earth, and never a moment when the sunset ceases to die. It is well to greet serenely even the first glimmer of the dawn when we see it, not hastening towards it with undue speed, nor leaving the sunset without gratitude for the dying light that once was dawn.

'In the moral world we are ourselves the light-bearers, and the cosmic process is in us made flesh. For a brief space it is granted to us, if we will, to enlighten the darkness that surrounds our path. As in the ancient torch-race, which seemed to Lucretius to be the symbol of all life, we press forward torch in hand along the course. Soon from behind comes the runner who will outpace us. All our skill lies in giving into his hand the living torch, bright and unflickering, as we ourselves disappear in the darkness.'

CHAPTER XVI

AUTUMN LEAVES

ELLIS wrote the Postscript with a special sense of relief because he had often dreaded that he would die before the *Studies* were finished. The subject of sex had occupied him so long that he felt prematurely old at fifty, ready, like Prospero, to abandon his lore and break his magic wand. 'I am well aware that the task that has occupied the best part of my life can have left few years and little strength for any work that comes after.' He had completed his life-work — and when the play is over the curtain is supposed to go down. He little anticipated the glorious anticlimax which was to include some of his finest books and richest friendships, his wider influence and general fame. For nearly ten years a friendly cloud of impending death seemed to hover about him. He had warmed both hands before the fire of life and was ready to depart.

After a first meeting with Ellis in 1910, Henry W. Nevinson, the well-known journalist, made the following comment in his diary: 'Went to West Drayton with Dr. Ettie Sayer, and found Du Bois (the intellectual and attractive half-negro champion of his contemned race in America) waiting for us in a pure white flannel suit. Mrs. Ellis was there too with a pony trap, but Havelock and I walked. He is a tall, robust man, but shy and modest, with the look of a refined scholar; much like Edward Carpenter, who seems to be his greatest friend; has quantities of white-grey hair, and a good deal of loose beard, a strong, large nose, strong large teeth, and pure blue eyes that have a very slight cast in them, and shyly avoid looking at you if pos-

sible. We walked to "Woodpecker," the beautiful little house they have made out of three cottages, near a common in the midst of that great flat. Under a walnut tree we discussed quite ordinary subjects, except his proposal for a real history university where people would learn history by studying the ages as they still survive — the savage, the classic, the medieval, and so on, in Africa, Albania, Spain, and other lands. As a further advantage, I suggested that the eating of a student now and then by cannibals who wished to assimilate his virtues would be a good object-lesson in sacrificial rites. Had tea and again discussed. He praised my essay on "Peace and War in the Balkans" very highly, and told me how his books had been suppressed and abused as immoral; one could not get them in the British Museum Library, except in German (as though they would exercise less evil effect in that scientific tongue!); but now a Society containing eleven bishops was imploring him to write the opening textbook for a series on Eugenics and Sociology. This gave him much pleasurable amusement. We walked back to the station and parted with esteem, at all events on my side.'[1]

As Ellis had not long since been branded insincere and obscene in an English court of law, and was still to many minds the incarnation of licentious erudition, he could hardly avoid finding some pleasurable amusement in the invitation of the National Council of Public Morals to write the first of their *New Tracts for the Times*. The president of the council was then the Lord Bishop of Durham, the director and secretary was Reverend James Marchant, while among the seventy vice-presidents were not only other prominent bishops, but numerous lords, ladies, knights and pro-

[1] H. W. Nevinson: *More Changes More Chances*, 357–58.

fessors. Under these highly respectable auspices was published in 1911 Ellis's booklet, *The Problem of Race-Regeneration*, which was the first general statement of his programme for social reform. In the previous century, he pointed out, there had been distinct progress along four lines: (1) the elimination of filth with the spread of sanitation, (2) factory legislation, (3) national education, (4) concern for the child not only before school age, but in the pre-natal period. It was now necessary to go still farther back and improve the quality of life itself by means of eugenics, particularly from the negative side of regulating conception. For a small body of readers he had expressed this point of view emphatically enough in Volume VI, but in *The Problem of Race-Regeneration* he brought it in simple form before the whole of Great Britain, and consequently 1911 is an outstanding date in the history of the birth-control movement of English-speaking countries. The Drysdales had been doing valiant work for more than half a century, it is true, but their greatest influence was on the Continent, especially in France, Germany and Holland; in England their Malthusian League remained an isolated propagandist organization founded on dogmatic Malthusian economics, which seems to have lost them many possible adherents.

The World of Dreams also appeared in 1911. At the same time Ellis was putting the finishing touches on a large collection of essays, entitled *The Task of Social Hygiene*. This volume, published early in 1912, was an elaboration of both his recent pamphlet and *Sex in Relation to Society*. Here Ellis carried his humanism into a field that had been cultivated almost entirely by solemn academics. 'It is the task of this hygiene not only to make sewers, but to re-make love, and to do both in the same spirit of human fellowship, to ensure

finer individual development and a larger social organization.' One of the chapters, 'The Changing Status of Women,' originally published in 1888, summed up Ellis's thoroughgoing feminism. But he has never had any sympathy with vandalism, and would not even tolerate it when associated with woman's suffrage in 1912. When asked to join in the defence of two suffragettes with incendiary proclivities, who were enjoying a hunger strike in prison, Ellis refused somewhat heatedly, resenting the attempt to identify what he regarded as a noble cause with vulgar criminality. 'It may well be that these ladies are persons of more than average high personal character. But the general public is not concerned with their private character but with their public actions. Law makes some rough attempt to distinguish the responsible offender from the irresponsible offender. But it is far too crude an instrument to distinguish human motives. Why should it? An act does not become less criminal, less anti-social, because the motive behind it happened to be good. . . . Forcible feeding, there can be no doubt, is thoroughly objectionable and attended by serious risks. But to whom ought the petition against forcible feeding be addressed? Certainly not to the officials, for they are already as much opposed to forcible feeding as you or I, but to Mrs. Leigh and Miss Evans.' [1]

In the fifteen years between 1897 and 1912 Ellis had published thirteen volumes, including his main work and various special studies. With no pressing duties ahead and the war still beyond the horizon he was now free to indulge in the luxury of speculation and look back leisurely on his own pilgrimage. He had never tried to formulate a system of philosophy, but

[1] From a letter by Ellis to one of the petitioners for the imprisoned ladies.

running through all his writings were various tendencies, suggestions, which called for a more complete, harmonious statement. With this general end in view he wrote three essays (all published in *The Atlantic Monthly*) on religion, dancing and morality, which were included, a decade later, in *The Dance of Life*. It should be emphasized, therefore, that *The Dance of Life* is chiefly a product of Ellis's early fifties, not of his sixties; it is a pre-war rather than a post-war book.

Quite naturally he turned first to the theme of religion which had run through his life and been the central problem of his youth. Now more than ever he could appreciate the significance of his conversion in an age of increasing doubt and instability, and around a history of that personal crisis he built an essay proving the compatibility of science and mysticism. He wanted to show that 'the harmony of the religious impulse and of the scientific impulse is not merely a conclusion to be deduced from the history of the past,' but 'is a living fact to-day,' a process lying in human nature and 'still open to all experience.'

As in *The New Spirit*, he still considered mysticism the essence of religion, which he defined as 'the art of finding our emotional relationship to the world conceived as a whole.' [1] But there is some ambiguity in the discussion because religion appears both as the happy organization of our diverse emotions and as the function of one particular instinct — a natural impulse as well as a delicate art. The mystic's rapture, which gives no *knowledge*, according to Ellis, 'is the outcome of the natural instinct of the individual soul,' and religious mysticism is itself 'an art which instinctively reveals to us the secrets of other arts.' [2]

[1] *The Dance of Life*, 191. [2] *Ibid.*, 234, 237.

On the other hand, conversion, which he identifies with mysticism, 'is fundamentally a readjustment of psychic elements to each other, enabling the whole machine to work harmoniously.' [1]

In 1884 Ellis had called Hinton a 'mystic,' 'if mysticism may be regarded psychologically as the union of new thought with emotion, or indistinct ancestral thought. Whenever a sudden influx of intellectual life intrudes upon the more slowly growing spiritual life of humanity, men endowed with the immense enthusiasm, the free, wide-ranging speculation, the power of fusing the incongruous elements of thought and feeling which Hinton possessed, are certain to arise.' [2] Two years later Ellis spoke of the mystic impulse which 'we are compelled to regard — after the sexual passion which is the very life of the race itself — as man's strongest and most persistent instinct. So long as it is saved from fanaticism by a strenuous devotion to science, by a perpetual reference to the moral structure of society, it will always remain an integral portion of the whole man in his finest developments.[3]

In so shadowy and all-important a realm, simple clarity does not seem to be possible, but altogether it is more intelligible to speak of mysticism as a form of profound emotional adjustment or integration, than as the satisfaction of any specific impulse. The process is not really explicable. It is like the experience of æsthetic appreciation which temporarily releases the individual from the storms and poisons of personal desire. 'If we could use that once ridiculed term

[1] *The Dance of Life*, 218.

[2] 'Hinton's Later Thought,' in *Mind*, July, 1884.

[3] From a review of *Towards Democracy*, in *Papers for the Times*, Feb., 1886.

"æsthete" seriously,' Ellis says elsewhere, 'one might say that the Mystic is the æsthete of the Universe.' [1] And thus Ellis's mysticism merges with the spectacular metaphysics of Jules de Gaultier.

Through science we are more or less adapted to the whole of things intellectually, while mysticism represents a corresponding emotional adaptation. From this point of view science and mysticism need not be in conflict, for they represent different but thoroughly complementary functions of the human mind. The important thing, according to Ellis, is that those functions be not mixed. 'When the mystic professes that, as such, he has knowledge of the same order as the man of science, or when the scientist claims that, as such, he has emotion that is like that of the man of religion, each of them deceives himself. . . . The function of intellectual thought — which is that of the art of science — may, certainly, be invaluable for religion; it makes possible the purgation of all that pseudo-science, all that philosophy, good or bad, which has poisoned and encrusted the simple spontaneous impulse of mysticism in the open air of Nature and in the face of the sun. The man of science may be a mystic, but cannot be a true mystic unless he is so relentless a man of science that he can tolerate no alien science in his mysticism. The mystic may be a man of science, but he will not be a good man of science unless he understands that science must be kept for ever bright and pure from all admixture of mystical emotion; the fountain of his emotion must never rust the keenness of his intellectual scalpel.' [2]

That spiritual division of labor may have been com-

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 219.

[2] *The Dance of Life*, 239–40; this passage did not occur in the original version of the essay.

mon in the past, and is ideally illustrated by a Lucretius or a Spinoza. But in these latter days, atrophy of one side or another of the individual's nature produces the dogmatic scientist who is contemptuous of mysticism and the frustrated mystic who is blind to the contributions of science. Even more abundant are those with rusty scalpels, who divide their time between ghosts and atoms. Meanwhile, the poet agonizes under the weight of his own inverted theology, the metaphysician talks of sunset on old marble as he clings with his finger-tips to Olympus, and the man-in-the-street, tempted by the phantasmagoria of faiths, heresies, truths, panaceas, hypotheses that swirl about him, creeps back into some comfortable dogma which nicely houses his vegetative nature.

To all this confusion Ellis has been a noteworthy exception. For half a century, since his conversion in the solitude of Australia, he has been equally the scientist and the mystic, at home in the world and essentially at peace with himself. Mysticism, for him, has not meant retreat into intellectual vagueness or the revelation of some supernatural world, but simply a sense of the vast perspective here. He has not ceased to exalt the mind while dissecting its humble biological origins. He has not lost, through sophistication, a primitive underlying simplicity. 'The really great man is never eccentric. His personality is as concealed as possible. There are in the man of genius few uneven levels of attainment, no intellectual superstitions. No vain apprehensions. There is in him no fear of analyses; he carries them, or rather they lead him to illusory consequences; he returns effortlessly to the real. He imitates, he innovates; he never abjures the old because it is old; nor the new because it is new; but finds in each something of the present moment.' These words

apply in large measure to Havelock Ellis, although they were written of Leonardo da Vinci. [1]

Here again it must be emphasized that Ellis is primarily a religious personality; this is the key to his conduct as well as to his views of morality. 'The mystic explanation of the Universe is the ultimate explanation and the largest,' [2] embracing any special emphasis from the intensely unworldly to the violently sensual. He who has seized the vast flux of things in his single vision is not carried away by the reforming passion or obsessed with furious efficiency. He is so moved by the wealth of existence in its countless manifestations that he attains a measureless tolerance which no ordinary moral position could possibly comprehend. The conduct of the active moralist is strenuous, persistent, decisive, solemn. He is blind to the absurdity of the world and the jests of God. The greater his success, the narrower his perspective. The less a mystic, the more a moralist, as life itself is finally sacrificed to the abortive ideal. On the other hand, the mystic may be considered a sceptic in the sense that he will not stress out of all proportion some bits of intellectual analysis, or some 'supremely important ideals,' because to him they are only fragments of the total picture. The *whole* is so distinctly his interest that he will never identify it with, or subordinate it to, any of its parts. He is indicted, not because he affirms so much, but because he would mutilate so little.[3]

[1] Paul Valéry: *Variety*, Eng. trans., 193.

[2] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 28.

[3] Cf. Keyserling: 'A mystic is a contemplative man whose life emanates entirely from within, who lives in the presence of things and for that essence alone, whose consciousness has taken root in Atman, and who accordingly is completely truthful and pours out his inmost being without any inhibition. Such a man cannot deny any expression of life. He perceives divine power at work in every one of them, he reveres every

In the spirit of the mystic Ellis could only write of morality 'as an art,' not as a form of tyrannical geometry which human beings have imposed upon themselves. He could only write of it as an individual adventure, through darkness, ecstasy and pain. Before the 'awful conception of moral force' his very writing trembles.[1] No other aspect of life seems to terrify him so, for it implies arbitrary and violent divisions, a separating of man from Nature and of men from one another. In the essay, composed in 1913 and later included in *The Dance of Life* under the title of 'The Art of Morals,' Ellis summed up his view of the ethical problem, chiefly by means of brilliantly succinct comments on kindred thinkers from Marcus Aurelius and Plotinus to Shaftesbury and Gaultier. Yet more characteristic of Ellis are the random notes on morality made during the same year and printed in the first volume of *Impressions and Comments*. 'There is nothing plainer than the fatal analytic action of logic on the moral life. It is only when the white light of life is broken up that the wild extravagance of colour appears. It is only when the harmonious balance of the moral life is overturned that the Deadly Sins, which in their due co-ordination are woven into the whole texture of life, become truly damnable. Life says forever: "Do I contradict myself? Very well, then, I contradict myself." And to such Morality, Logic is fatally subversive. There can be no large and harmonious and natural Morality when Logic is made to stand where it ought not.' For Ellis morality (in the laudatory sense) begins and ends in the individual, following his own deepest impulses, passionately, courageously. One

expression of life, and any naïveté, no matter how it is expressed, is more sacred to him than any phenomenon limited to external form and prejudice.' (*Travel Diary of a Philosopher*, Eng. trans., I, 104.)

[1] Cf. 'St. Francis and Others'; *The Nineteenth Century*.

who does that almost inevitably goes far in a good direction. This assurance, be it feeling, faith, or insight, is the earmark of Ellis's moralizing. He would dismiss all commandments for one remark by the imperial Stoic: 'As though the emerald should say: "Whatever happens I must be emerald."'

Rounding out Ellis's studies of religion and morality was 'The Philosophy of Dancing,' later entitled 'The Art of Dancing,' and used as the key-chapter of *The Dance of Life*. At the age of seven, it may be remembered, dancing was a regular part of his programme at Mrs. Granville's school. Years later, while living at Fountain Court, he went often with Symons to the music-halls, chiefly in order to see the dancing. (It is significant that to-day, in *Who's Who*, Symons puts after 'amusements,' 'hearing and playing music, seeing dancing.') Meanwhile, with his first trips to Spain, he had begun his study of the dances in every section of the peninsula. He loved their wonderful variety, but the slowest dances were always to him the most beautiful. Early in this century he was in Paris when Isadora Duncan arrived with her revolutionary fire, and a few years later he greeted with religious joy the coming of the Russian Ballet. He is now proud to number among his friends Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, and recently wrote a preface for Shawn's book, *The American Ballet*.

It was only indirectly that Ellis touched on these personal experiences in 'The Philosophy of Dancing.' He wanted to present the subject in its widest reaches, and so he began with a brief proem on the universal presence of rhythm, from the beating of waves to the play of philosophers' thoughts.[1] Among insects and birds as among all primitive peoples dancing leads on to

[1] Cf. Algernon Blackwood: *The Centaur*, 213–14.

mating. Thence it becomes man's religion, his main form of worship. 'To dance is to take part in the cosmic control of the world. Every sacred dionysian dance is an imitation of the divine dance.' Finally, dancing takes on the character of an independent art, although it can never lose entirely its connection with worship and love. For Ellis, 'dancing is the loftiest, the most moving, the most beautiful of the arts, because it is no mere translation or abstraction from life; it is life itself. It is the only art, as Rahel Varnhagen said, of which we ourselves are the stuff.' 'If we are indifferent to the art of dancing, we have failed to understand, not merely the supreme manifestation of physical life, but also the supreme symbol of spiritual life.'

The word 'dance' tends to carry somewhat frivolous connotations, but it should be obvious that Ellis has in mind no pale and simpering activity. He knows only too well that the great dancer may have blood in her slippers, and the dance of life involves the dance of death. He knows that the girls around the May Pole are sisters of the mad votaries of Dionysus. He knows with Nietzsche that 'it is no small advantage to have a hundred Damoclean swords suspended above one's head; that is how one learns to dance, that is how one attains "freedom of movement."'

In contrast to such well-rounded essays as those on morality, religion and dancing, Ellis had been accustomed to make short, informal notes on a wide variety of subjects which happened to interest him, since the early days of 'Books I have Read' and the frequent soliloquies jotted down in the solitude of Australia. At times they contributed directly to his main work, and one group was woven into 'St. Francis and Others.' 'But as one grows older the possibilities of these uses become more limited. One realises in the

Autumn that leaves no longer have a vital function to perform; there is no longer any need why they should cling to the tree. So let them be scattered to the winds.'[1] And in this mood Ellis put together a sheaf of his thoughts and feelings for the first volume of his *Impressions and Comments*, which extended from July, 1912, to the end of 1913. The second volume, covering the war period, ended with March, 1920, and the third and final volume with January, 1923. They disclose in full maturity his rich and delicate thought. They are only collections of *pensées*, fragments, prose-poems, without any systematic arrangement, it is true, but flowers of this sort, which wise men save from the flood of time, often outlive the most ambitious works.

'It is inevitable,' Ellis wrote in the original preface, 'that such Leaves cannot be judged in the same way as though they constituted a Book. They are much more like loose pages from a Journal. Thus they tend to be more personal, more idiosyncratic, than in a book it would be lawful for a writer to be. Often, also, they show blanks which the intelligence of the reader must fill in. At the best they merely present the aspect of the moment, the flash of a single facet of life, only to be held in the brain provided one also holds therein many other facets, for the fair presentation of the great crystal of life.' In the face of this caution it should be impossible for a reader to object to them on the grounds of incompleteness or inconsistency. They are *finished* in their own particular way, like the fragments of Shenstone or the thoughts of Pascal, and place Ellis high in that order of writers. Fortunately, he did not anticipate how long his autumn was to be, for otherwise he might not have scattered those luminous leaves so soon.

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, I, Preface.

Ellis himself considers the third volume of *Impressions and Comments* his most intimate personal book, but they are all valuable in this respect, whether he writes of death, drama or the thrush's song. The appearance of Gaby Deslys in London carries him back to Bianca Stella dancing in Spain. He sees the connection between Norman architecture and the genius of the Norman people. He notes that there are two extreme and opposed styles of writing, 'the liquid style that flows, and the bronze or marmoreal style that is moulded or carved.' He finds that Justice Darling 'could not read a chapter of Rabelais without being bored to death.' Again and again he speaks of flowers, of flowers and gods, 'the Loveliness of Sex and the Loveliness of Creation.'

As the weather softened at the beginning of April, 1913, he felt the need for a pilgrimage, and then he imagined where he might go if he followed his migratory impulse each month in the year. This ideal programme reveals more of the inner Ellis than chapters of factual detail, for it sums up the happiness that he remembers and the dreams that he enjoys. 'In January certainly — if I confined my migrations to Europe — I would be in the gardens of Malaga, for at that season it is that we of the North most crave to lunch beneath the orange trees and to feel the delicious echo of the sun in the air of midnight. In February I would go to Barcelona, where the cooler air may be delightful, though when is it not delightful in Barcelona, even if martial law prevails? For March there is doubtless Sicily. For April there is no spot like Seville, when Spring arrives in a dazzling intoxicating flash. In May one should be in Paris to meet the spring again, softly insinuating itself into the heart under the delicious northern sky. In June and July we may be anywhere,

in cities or in forests. August I prefer to spend in London, for then only is London leisurely, brilliant, almost exotic; and only then can one really see London. During September I would be wandering over Suffolk, to inhale its air and to revel in its villages, or else anywhere in Normandy where the crowd are not. I have never known where I would be in October, to escape the first deathly chill of winter; but at all events there is Aix-les-Bains, beautifully cloistered within its hills and still enlivened by fantastic visions from the whole European world. In November there is the Cornish coast, then often most exquisite, with soft nights, magical skies, and bays star-illuminated with fishers' lights, fire-flies of the sea. And before November is over I would be in Rome to end the year, not Rome the newfangled capital of an upstart kingdom, but that Rome, if we may still detect it, which is the greatest and most inspiring city in the world.' [1]

Ellis notes in *Who's Who* that his amusements are 'travel chiefly,' and he likes to quote the remark that 'to travel is to die continually.' But after his brief visit with Olive Schreiner at Florence in the spring of 1914, the war came and he was confined to England for nearly six years. He was not much surprised by the onset of the carnage, under the existing conditions of Europe, but he thought (as did the experts, except Kitchener) that it was too serious to last very long. Detecting at once the fanatical chauvinism which was to overturn the sanest minds, he wrote in his journal on August 10, 1914: 'How unfailingly the Irony of Providence has arranged that every country's function of Moral Consciousness shall be exercised vicariously by all the other countries!' The view frequently expressed early in the war that monuments and works of

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, I, 119–20.

art could well be sacrificed, if only the men were saved, met with no sympathy from Ellis. 'For it is by his traditions that Man is Man and not by the number of meaningless superfluous millions whom he spawns over the earth. So it is that while my heart aches for the fates of countless thousands of innocent men and women and children to-day, I am none the less sad as I think day and night of the rare and exquisite flowers of ancient civilisation I knew and loved of old, now crushed and profaned.' [1]

Hitherto Ellis had given himself to no serious study of the make-up of the German people (aside, of course, from his devotion to Goethe, Heine and German music), but the war obligated him to do so. He was convinced that Germany was the primary aggressor, under the domination of Prussian militarism and false ideals of 'Kultur,' although the allies were by no means guiltless. He saw the French 'as the people most intolerant, silently but deeply, of the war they are so ably and heroically waging.' [2] He saw a chief key to the situation in the differences of birth rate among the various belligerent countries. He tried to think through the matter clearly and he wrote calmly, throughout the war. In an article on 'Why the Germans are not Loved' (published in *The New Statesman* in November, 1914), he recalled Steinhausen's pre-war survey of European dislike for Germany, extending over a period of two thousand years. 'The Germans,' said Ellis, 'are a great factor in the world's life; they will not be exterminated, whatever happens; they even have a large part — as they like to remind us — in our own blood. We shall still have to live in the world with them and may as well try to understand them.

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 52–53.
[2] *Essays in War-Time*, 65.

If the world has not loved them, that is scarcely matter for exultation.' And in conclusion: 'Whatever the might of Germany may prove to be worth, it remains a tragedy for itself and all mankind that one of the youngest and most vigorous of great nations — eagerly trying to snatch at the culture which is the mature growth of centuries — should seek to thrust its gifts on the world by brute force, while yet dimly realising that one of the greatest national assets is love.' After some preliminary papers on 'Kultur,' 'The Psychology of the German,' and 'The German Spirit,' Ellis prepared a carefully impartial study of the characteristics of the German genius, along the lines of his book on British genius. It was rejected as 'pro-German' by the editor of an international scientific magazine, and also by a leading English magazine, and remains to be published, as originally intended, in a book on the European peoples. Taken altogether, Ellis's numerous articles touching on aspects of the war are scholarly and illuminating, free from malice and bitterness, but not highly distinguished, not to be classed with his best work. Most of them were collected in the two volumes, *Essays in War-Time* (1916) and *The Philosophy of Conflict* (1919), which have already fallen into oblivion.

His subdued voice was not suited to those roaring years and he confided his best thoughts to the pages of his notebook as he roamed the lanes and seacoast of England. Some of those pages were later published in the second volume of *Impressions and Comments*, the most eloquent of Ellis's books, the richest in sheer prose-poetry.

In the midst of human chaos he has always been able to find rest in his religion of Nature. If he were to define sacrilege or heresy in his metaphorical way, he

would probably identify it with that common modern tendency to speak of Nature as cruel, bloody, reckless or indifferent. Such language imports to him an utterly inverted scheme of values, and during the war it was especially ironical that the mutilators of the face of the world should use such epithets. At no time had Nature's methods been so prolonged or efficient as man's were then proving to be. On the 17th of July, 1915, Ellis wrote:

'A thrill of joy passed through me as we drove along the beautiful road and my eyes chanced to fall on the poppies in the field. It has always been so since I was a schoolboy and I suppose it will always be. A friend said sadly this spring that for her the war had taken all their beauty from the daffodils. I do not feel that, but rather the reverse. Behind the passing insanity of Man the beauty of Nature seems to become more poignant and her serene orderliness more deeply peaceful. So when men tell me how they have lived in the trenches ankle-deep in human blood, I think how Nature has shed these great drops of her pure and more immortal blood over the green and yellow earth. And I dream lingeringly over the poppies in the corn at Merton as I went through the narrow paths on my way to school, and the incarnadined slopes of Catalonia in spring, and the rich scarlet of the large fields around the beautiful old church of Worstead, and now the soft bright red splashes that shine here to-day, as we drive among the Chiltern Hills.

'To allow our vision of Nature to be disturbed by our vision of Man is to allow the infinitely small to outweigh the infinitely great. If we keep our eyes fixed on Nature, whose most exquisitely fantastic flowers — when all is said and done — we ourselves remain, how little it matters! Voltaire, as his *Micromegas* remains

to testify, was wiser. Nature continues the process of her resurrections, whatever may happen to the animalcule Man.' [1]

Two months later Ellis again took up this theme:

'We have just passed through the loveliest week of all the year and the harvest has now at length been safely gathered in. Yet, once more, I notice the way in which some people seriously and deliberately resent the beauty of Nature when there is war among mankind. This beauty, they say, merely shows that Nature is blind and stupid and dead. Now that attitude is curious, rather pathetic, a little comic. What was it they expected?

'We could understand such an attitude among the inhabitants of a mity cheese, in the face of the nonchalant serenity of diners who eat cheese. We could understand it among the last representatives of the Mammoth or the Dinosaur, vaguely apprehending that with their disappearance from the earth the universe would henceforth be shrouded in gloom. But it is the peculiar privilege of Man, beyond any other animal, to look before and after, to pierce with clearer vision the many-coloured dome of his world and divine the unstained radiance beyond. In so far as he fails to do this he is still in the sub-human stage; in so far as he succeeds he is not only more human, he is nearer to the all-embracing heart of Nature. The more human we are, the better able we are to join in singing Nature's exultant song.' [2]

In October, 1914, Mrs. Ellis sailed for the United States, and at first Ellis was fearful for her safety at sea and then for her health under the strain of an American lecture tour. In November, Captain Ed-

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 81–83.

[2] *Ibid.*, 84.

ward Peppen Ellis died, at the age of eighty-seven. During the thirty years of his retirement he had been visited regularly by his son with whom he was always on excellent terms. He was buried in accordance with the Funeral Service of the Church of England which held for that son 'its double measure of solemn sadness.' 'For to-day, maybe,' Havelock Ellis wrote on the 17th of November, 'that rite has in this Kentish graveyard for the last time been paid to any of the males of my house, who in centuries of old showed themselves so faithful to its observance, and in beautiful old churchyards of Suffolk and of Kent counted it their high office to scatter the grace of this final Mystery over so many human things that now are woven afresh into the texture of the world.'

Ellis's four sisters have remained unmarried and, as he is without children, an entire house will pass with his death. But that bare human fact leaves him undisturbed. For the line as for the individual, death and birth must be equally acceptable.

The historic year 1914 also marked the beginning of Mrs. Margaret Sanger's long crusade for voluntary parenthood. In the April number of *The Woman Rebel*, that preliminary firebrand which introduced the population problem to the United States, the term 'birth control' was used for the first time. Four months later the attempt of Comstock to bring Mrs. Sanger prematurely to trial on the grounds of distributing 'obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, indecent and disgusting' information justified her in jumping bail and taking ship for England, where she could take time to prepare her defence. In the last week of December she met Ellis and at once there sprang up a warm friendship which has remained unbroken. In the pressure of her training and work as a nurse, and with

two infant sons on her hands, she had not had much opportunity for general study, but through 1915 she worked on her case with the constant aid of Ellis and finally returned to America with a solid intellectual foundation for her propaganda. After constant delays the charges against her were dropped and in October, 1916, she opened the first birth-control clinic in the United States. Without taking credit from Mrs. Sanger one can safely say that the mind of Havelock Ellis pervades her world-wide influence, while she is partly responsible for Ellis stressing the question of birth control so frequently in recent years. It was especially significant that they met in the midst of the war, for both were convinced independently that population pressure was one of the principal causes of the awful catastrophe.

Mrs. Ellis was received enthusiastically all over the United States, but the tour was very exhausting and she returned to England over a submarine-infested ocean, on the verge of a complete breakdown. She recovered partially and at once went to work on an elaborate series of new lectures. Meanwhile she eagerly advised Ellis to make a trip to the United States, where he would find a host of admirers. But in spite of his many American friends and his great interest in this country, he was not tempted. The very idea of receiving ovations or making speeches was quite appalling, and he was satisfied to have Americans go to him. 'I am really glad,' Ellis said to Walter Tittle, 'that I am less known in England than America. I greatly prefer to be at a comfortable distance from what fame I possess.'

In the spring of 1916, Mrs. Ellis suffered another serious relapse, was ill through the summer, and in September caught pneumonia while watching the first

Zeppelin brought down in flames. She died on the 16th of the month at the age of fifty-five. For years her system had been ravaged by diabetes, and her heart was so large and weak that she knew it might snap under a sudden shock, but she remained courageous, and active almost to the end. As she had planned, her remains were cremated, without religious ceremony, to the strains of Handel's *Largo*.

As the weeks went by Ellis felt increasingly alone, learning to appreciate 'the heightened power which those we love possess when they are dead.' He could not go back to Cornwall that winter and he could not bear to go back for four years more. In June, 1917, he wandered, disconsolate, on the half-forsaken coast of Kent: 'For me, too, as for so many others, two worlds seem dead, an outer world across the Channel that I shared with my fellows and an inner that my own heart held. In these two lines of coast an old circle of memories in which for me both these worlds once moved comes to sensitive life again. I look across towards Ostend, pounded perhaps to death by our great bombarding guns, which boom now and again, till they seem to strike the ground I stand on, and I think of happy days when I wandered along its broad front and saw the splendid sun over the western sea towards my England, and I think of eager little feet that will never trip along that front again. And it is not so much I that dream, but the world itself has become a dream of dead pasts while I who live have yet no life for any new dream. So to me, too, there comes home the foolish and haunting echo —

> And oh! the song the sea sings
> Is dark everlastingly.'

To deepen his sorrow came the insistent demand of

Olive Schreiner that he burn her later letters, if not the earlier. Protesting in vain that they were of great literary worth as well as dear to him personally, he put hundreds of them into the fire. The experience upset him so much that he did not see her or write to her for months. The outward and visible signs of his richest friendship had been partly destroyed.

He came to Christmas Day, 1917, and began a note: 'The great recurring Festivals of the Year, each one more than the last, like the tolling of a bell, remind me how I am nearer than ever before to the last stroke of midnight, the final rhythmic flutter of the swallow's wing.' [1]

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, II, 127.

CHAPTER XVII

VITA NUOVA

In February, 1918, Ellis was fifty-nine, and seemed to himself at the end of his race. Then, rapidly, subtle changes went on within his soul, new friends came into his life, and a glorious Spring began. He became not only himself again, but in many ways more happy and confident than ever before. To-day he is the ancient sea-captain back from a long voyage, one who has wandered far and forgiven much and found many a strange tale to tell.

This renaissance can be traced clearly from the middle of the second volume of *Impressions and Comments*. Under the date of April 12, 1918, he wrote:

'It is one of the first days of Spring, and I sit once more in the Old Garden where I hear no faintest echo of the obscene rumbling of the London streets which are yet so little away. Here the only movement I am conscious of is that of the trees shooting forth their first sprays of bright green, and of the tulips expanding the radiant beauty of their flaming globes, and the only sound I hear is the blackbird's song — the liquid softly gurgling notes that seem to well up spontaneously from an infinite Joy, an infinite Peace, at the Heart of Nature and to bring a message not from some remote Heaven of the Sky or the Future but the Heaven that is Here, beneath our feet, even beneath the exquisite texture of our own skins, the Joy, the Peace, at the Heart of the mystery which is Man. For man alone can hear the Revelation that lies in the blackbird's song.

'These years have gone by, I scarcely know how, and

Havelock Ellis.

the heart has often been crushed and heavy, life has seemed to recede into the dimness behind, and one's eyes have been fixed on the End that crowns all. Yet on the first days of Spring, and this Spring more than those of the late years that passed over us, soft air and sunshine lap me around and I indeed see again the solemn gaiety of the tulip and hear the message in the blackbird's low and serenely joyous notes, my heart is young again, and the blood of the world is in my veins, and a woman's soul is beautiful and her lips are sweet.'

Six weeks later, Ellis sat again in the Old Garden and wrote the prose-poem, 'To See the World as Beauty,' which sums up so simply his whole religious pilgrimage.[1] Christmas Day, 1919, found him in the peaceful solitude of his room, 'never less alone than when alone,' lying back in his chair happily and dreamily, the caravan of his memories gently moving to the tune of the music played by his neighbors in the flat above. In February he took ship for Malta, which he had never previously visited, but remembered since youth as a place mentioned in Coleridge's *Table Talk*. After being shut away in England for six years, it was a great joy to travel, and especially to pace a deck once more. He was not so much interested in present-day Malta as in the recently excavated relics of a great prehistoric civilization. Thence on to Athens for the first time, he tramped the unfamiliar streets, lived in cafés and restaurants, and visited the markets, until he had a living sense of the time-honored city. He was little impressed by the modern inhabitants and repelled by the ugly markets, but he found beyond the track of the orthodox sight-seer the subtler monuments of immortal Greece. After a month of new sights, he enjoyed the rapid panorama, speeding home-

[1] Quoted in Chapter V; *Impressions and Comments*, II, 139–41.

ward across Europe. Stopping off in Paris, which he had avoided for a decade, he lingered day after day, finding it more beautiful than ever.

At last, in November, 1920, he went back to his beloved Cornwall, lost to him since the winter of 1915–16. Memories still kept him from the region of Carbis Bay, but even far to the north at Padstow he knew that he was in the land which was most bound up with his work and heart. Those winters in London had not been good for him. Now he could wander along the coast for hours, wade across unbridged streams and lie on the rocks in the sun, beyond the sound of trains and the sight of people.

At the end of February he returned to London, feeling unusually robust. The following week, while visiting one of his sisters at Tunbridge Wells, he made a rapid two-mile walk to catch a train, without the least fatigue, but three hours later he was prostrated by a duodenal ulcer. It was a severe attack and for more than a month he was bed-ridden, a temporary invalid for the first time since the scarlet fever in 1888. 'Yet, I find, I remain serene, even continuously cheerful. For some years past I have accommodated my arrangements to Death and guided my activities accordingly, even though I may not yet have completed everything I had planned as the minimum — for I am content the maximum should go — of my Day's work — my Day's Play — in the world. Without rest yet without haste — it is the law of my nature which I have no intention of changing now. My faith has carried me through so far and will accompany me to the end. Death is the final Master and Lord. But Death must await my good pleasure. I command Death because I have no fear of Death, but only love.' [1]

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 55.

In May, 1921, the second volume of *Impressions and Comments* was published and became, a little later, the occasion for H. L. Mencken's exalted eulogy of Ellis, which aroused the attention of even the dullest critics and helped to prepare the literary public in the United States for *The Dance of Life*. 'If the test of the personal culture of a man,' said Mencken, 'be the degree of his freedom from the banal ideas and childish emotions which move the great masses of men, then Havelock Ellis is undoubtedly the most civilized Englishman of his generation. He is a man of the soundest and widest learning, but it is not his positive learning that gives him distinction; it is his profound and implacable skepticism, his penetrating eye for the transient, the disingenuous and the shoddy.' And with reference to *Impressions and Comments*, second series: 'There is something almost of Renaissance dignity in his chronicle of his speculations. The man that emerges is not a mere scholar immured in his cell, but a man of the world superior to his race and his time — a philosopher viewing the childish passion of lesser men disdainfully and not yet too remote to understand it, and even to see in it a certain cosmic use. A fine air blows through the book. It takes the reader into the company of one whose mind is a real library and whose manner is that of a gentleman. He is the complete anti-Kipling. In him the Huxleian tradition comes to full flower.' [1]

That last sentence is obviously meant to be a supreme compliment, but it is exceedingly misleading. Two men more unlike than Huxley and Ellis could hardly be imagined. It is true that each had a medical training and possessed a notable literary style, but the style of Ellis is subdued, constrained, with lyrical

[1] *Prejudices*, Third Series, 189, 191.

moments that are vivid but nearly always gentle, while the writing of Huxley is nervous, tense, occasionally verbose, and trembling continually on the edge of bitter polemic. He dubbed himself 'the bull dog of Darwin' and 'a leader in the New Reformation.' He was a scientifically trained child of Martin Luther, and like Luther was never so healthy as when engaged in a righteous controversy. His long career was a running battle for 'the cause of Truth' with Owen, Wilberforce, Mivart, Arnold, Gladstone, Booth and numerous other eminent Victorians. Huxley declared that it is 'the religious feeling which is the essential basis of conduct,' and that 'there is only one right and the possibilities of wrong are infinite.' As members of 'the ethical process' we are eternally at war with 'the cosmic process.' The position of Huxley was positive, definite, militant, little modified by his widely heralded *agnosticism*. In his actual usage that term applied only to the precepts of dogmatic theology and abstract metaphysics. It did not weaken his allegiance to the findings of orthodox science and the principles of traditional morality. He spoke often of 'suspended judgment,' but his mind was not of the sceptical or mystical type. At all these specific points the views and characters of Huxley and Ellis must be considered antithetical — two great men, but poles apart.

As soon as he had recovered from his illness, Ellis put together the volume of *Little Essays of Love and Virtue*, containing 'The Meaning of Purity,' 'The Play-Function of Sex,' which he considers one of his best papers, and 'The Objects of Marriage' and 'The Love Rights of Women,' which were originally written for the *Birth Control Review* at the special request of Margaret Sanger. In the preface Ellis wrote: 'In these Essays — little, indeed, as I know them to be, com-

pared to the magnitude of their subjects — I have tried to set forth, as clearly as I can, certain fundamental principles, together with their practical application to the life of our time. Some of these principles were stated, more briefly and technically, in my larger *Studies* of sex; others were therein implied but only to be read between the lines. Here I have expressed them in simple language and with some detail. It is my hope that in this way they may more surely come into the hands of young people, youths and girls at the period of adolescence, who have been present to my thoughts in all the studies I have written of sex because I was myself of that age when I first vaguely planned them. I would prefer to leave to their judgment the question as to whether this book is suitable to be placed in the hands of older people. It might only give them pain. It is in youth that the questions of mature age can alone be settled, if they ever are to be settled, and unless we begin to think about adult problems when we are young all our thinking is likely to be in vain.' Thus Ellis literally kept the promise made to himself forty-six years earlier, that he would study the subject of sex in order to save other young people from the perplexities which were then tormenting him. And it is among young people that he has to-day his greatest following, although the book particularly dedicated to them does not seem to be so widely known.

For the chapter on 'Love as an Art' in *The Book of Marriage*, Keyserling combined sections from Ellis's essays on 'The Objects of Marriage' and 'The Play-Function of Sex.' It was in the latter that Ellis summed up his final convictions about the state of affairs which he has been chiefly interested in improving. 'The longer I live the more I realise the immense impor-

tance to the individual of the development through the play-function of erotic personality, and for human society of the acquirement of the art of love. At the same time I am ever more astonished at the rarity of erotic personality and the ignorance of the art of love, even among those men and women, experienced in the exercise of procreation, in whom we might most constantly expect to find such development and such art. At times one feels hopeless at the thought that civilisation in this supremely intimate field of life has yet achieved so little. For until it is generally possible to acquire erotic personality and to master the art of loving, the development of the individual man or woman is marred, the acquirement of human happiness and harmony remains impossible.' [1]

Encompassing the particular art of love is the whole art of life, which is the theme of Ellis's culminating work, *The Dance of Life*. Of the seven chapters, it will be recalled that the principal ones, those on dancing, religion and morals, were written and published separately between 1912 and 1914; the second half of the chapter on 'The Art of Writing' appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1908. The book itself began to take final form in 1920. But the central idea had been in his mind so long that he does not know when it first arose. Certainly it was implicit in his way of looking at things by the time he was seventeen and congenial to his temperament from the beginning. It may have come to him on the deck of the Surrey, when he was reading of Gargantua and Pantagruel. It may have crystallized below the surface several years later when he discovered in Lange's *History of Materialism* the harmonizing revelation that metaphysics was a sort of poetry.

Ellis frankly admits that the book is incomplete in a

[1] *Little Essays of Love and Virtue*, 121.

variety of ways. Written over a long period, it contains minor inconsistencies, does not represent his most matured reflections at every point, and lacks chapters on such subjects as building, travelling, cooking and dress. He would point out that a work of art may be unfinished as to details and thereby gain in genuine vitality and suggestive power. For the same reasons he has not been interested in, or capable of, constructing an elaborate intellectual system. 'We verge on philosophy. The whole of this book is on the threshold of philosophy. I hasten to add that it remains there. No dogmas are here set forth to claim any general validity.... It is clear how hesitant and tentative must be the attitude of one who, having found his life-work elsewhere than in the field of technical philosophy, may incidentally feel the need, even if only playfully, to speculate concerning his function and place in the universe. Such speculation is merely the instinctive impulse of the ordinary person to seek the wider implications bound up with his own little activities. It is philosophy only in the simple sense in which the Greeks understood philosophy, merely a philosophy of life, of one's own life, in the wide world.' [1]

Nevertheless, Ellis did realize that his philosophy, centring around the image of the dance, was in some degree an expression of 'that great classico-mathematical Renaissance in which it is our high privilege to live.' 'The dance is the rule of number and of rhythm and of measure and of order, of the controlling influence of form, of the subordination of the parts to the whole. That is what a dance is. And these same properties make up the classic spirit, not only in life, but, still more clearly and definitely, in the universe itself.' To grasp this metaphor, and at the same time

[1] *The Dance of Life*, viii, ix.

to show that it is not merely a metaphor, is the purpose of Ellis's work.

For the bulk of humanity, life has so long been a branch of celestial economics or military discipline that they could not possibly imagine it to be a ballet, intricate, difficult and sublime. But there have always been individuals who conceived of life as an art, as there have been peoples, such as the Greek and the Chinese (not to speak of the primitive), who have acted unconsciously in accordance with that conception. Unfortunately, the word 'art' is quite ambiguous, with both a neutral descriptive and a laudatory meaning; it could be legitimately argued that all our activities are 'arts,' as it could be argued that they should be 'arts.' Ellis's exposition suffers inevitably from this confusion in language, but his central theme is not thereby impaired. He is always interested in pointing out *nuances*, in breaking down rigid categories, in describing the fluidity of life. If all our activities are arts in essence, then the most of them can be *fine* arts in practice. There is a distinction, a great practical distinction, between the belief that man is primarily a law-obeying animal, and the belief that man is like a dancer or painter who uses rules (æsthetic or otherwise) *as suggestions*, in order to achieve his dream. And so Ellis writes at some length of an attitude, of life as an art, with elaborate illustrations of what it has been and what it might be. He begins naturally with the dance, the richest of symbols, 'the art that is most clearly made of the stuff of life.'

Thinking, at first sight, seems to be of sterner stuff, shaped by logic in the patterns of eternal truth. It is austere, solid, and, at its best, 'science,' which is supposed to be the very opposite of 'art.' But this opposition is peculiarly modern and peculiarly false, as Her-

bert Spencer pointed out in his early essay, 'The Genesis of Science.' [1] Science originates in the various concrete arts, and it always continues to be a process of doing as well as of knowing. Human thought is a dynamic, constructive activity bound up with a biological organism, and it could not possibly be the function of that mysterious mirror traditionally known as 'the mind.' As psychological processes, 'scientific discovery' and 'poetic creation' seem to be essentially alike. This general view of the relation between science and art Ellis arrived at imperceptibly, almost instinctively, and later found radically expanded in Nietzsche's 'illusionism,' Jules de Gaultier's 'Bovarysme,' and Vaihinger's 'fictionalism.' In his sympathetic exposition of Vaihinger, in the chapter on 'The Art of Thinking,' Ellis wrote: 'The craftsman who moulds conceptions with his mind cannot be put in a fundamentally different class from the craftsman who moulds conceptions with his hands any more than the poet can be put in a different class from the painter.' 'We make our own world; when we have made it awry, we can remake it approximately truer, though it cannot be absolutely true to the facts. It will never be finally made; we are always stretching forth to larger and better fictions which answer more truly to our growing knowledge and experience.' [2]

[1] Cf. *The Dance of Life*, 68.

[2] The most elaborate contemporary discussion of science as art may be found in Chapter IX of Dewey's great work, *Experience and Nature* (1925): 'Thinking is preëminently an art; knowledge and propositions which are the products of thinking, are works of art, as much as statuary and symphonies. . . . Conclusion and premise are reached by a procedure comparable to the use of boards and nails in making a box; or of paint and canvas in making a picture. If defective materials are employed or if they are put together carelessly and awkwardly, the result is defective. In some cases the result is called unworthy; in others, ugly; in others, inept; in others, wasteful, inefficient; and in still others untrue, false. But in each case the condemnatory adjective refers to the resulting

For the remainder of *The Dance of Life* Ellis enlarged his brilliant essay on learning to write, first published in 1908; revised slightly the earlier studies of 'Science and Mysticism' and 'Morality as an Art,' and wrote a conclusion dealing chiefly with the virtues of æsthetic contemplation which 'engenders neither hatred nor envy.' But always the biologist at heart, he could not finish the book finally without remarking once more that there can be no general improvement of man's lot until he ceases to cringe before the idol of blind, unrestricted reproduction.

Published in the summer of 1923, *The Dance of Life* began to win at once a remarkable success for so dignified a book. In the United States nearly forty thousand copies were sold during the first two years. It satisfied a widespread need for a philosophy of life which was not technical in statement and not orthodox in sentiment. It confirmed a growing conviction that life could be approached more fruitfully from the æsthetic than from the narrowly moral point of view. Few of the leading critics failed to join in the general chorus of laudation. A typical voice was that of Christopher Morley in *The Yale Review*: 'To review Dr. Ellis's book would be as impossible as to review life itself. For it speaks to those interior questions and honesties where the happiest wisdom is silence. . . . It is by its echo in young and undisciplined hearts that

work judged in the light of its methods of production. Scientific method or the art of constructing true perceptions is ascertained in the course of experience to occupy a privileged position in understanding other arts. But this unique position only places it the more securely as an art; it does not set its product, knowledge, apart from other works of art.' Although Dewey and Ellis have worked along very different lines, express themselves in utterly different styles, and are almost entirely ignorant of one another's writings, they are remarkably alike intellectually, both standing for a full-blooded *naturalism*, with a fine elasticity in ethics. On the other hand, Ellis is quite unlike Santayana personally, exhibits none of his neo-Olympianism, and is indifferent to his writings.

Mr. Ellis's book will prove its virtue. It is living considered as an art that is the acorn of Mr. Ellis's foliage. He helps us toward the only task worth while, the only task that can bring us peace. He helps us to face the exquisite riddle of life with greater piety and courage to turn our necessity to glorious gain.' Undoubtedly these remarks hold true of thousands, and in particular, of sensitive young men and women whom *The Dance of Life* has saved from the mire of cynical disillusion.

To the present writer, however, *The Dance of Life* appears to be much overrated, inferior as an artistic whole expressing the individual Havelock Ellis to *Affirmations*, *Sex in Relation to Society*, *Little Essays of Love and Virtue* or the *Impressions and Comments* included together. Composed over a period of many years, it is not a well-unified work, but is hung together by the loose word 'art.' It is so packed with allusions to new books and other people's ideas that Ellis's characteristic touch is often obliterated. For example, the core of the chapter on thinking is Vaihinger; the chapter on morality is simply a compact history of 'æsthetic ethics'; the conclusion is largely Gaultier. The best parts are those on writing and on his own religious experiences. *The Dance of Life* was written mostly by a bookish Ellis and is not as vital as the title implies. Many of those who praised it inordinately must have known little of Ellis and less of philosophy. Yet, after these qualifications are made, one is still compelled to admit that there is no other single book in our time which deals so comprehensively and richly with the great theme of the dance of life.

In the five years since *The Dance of Life* was finished, Ellis has continued to work as actively as ever, but he has published comparatively little. In 1924 he saw through the press the third volume of *Impressions and*

Comments, which, as has been said, he considers his most personal book. There again he fingers the rosary of his memories, but with a wistfulness that has ceased to be sad. He is no longer much attracted by the fury and extravagance of Shakespeare's plays, but is more and more drawn to *The Tempest*: 'Here Shakespeare has emerged from the conflict, even though it may possibly have been by shipwreck; he had passed beyond tragedy and beyond comedy, beyond and above to a serene air in which they could at last be seen as one by the magician Prospero, who is the final embodiment of Shakespeare's inner self. Prospero's return to his dukedom was a weak concession to a stage convention. One knows that in his heart Shakespeare also knew that Prospero would never return. For an earthly dukedom can mean nothing to the man who has finally grasped the whole universe in his vision, as an evanescent mist, and stands serenely on the last foothold and ultimate outlook of the world.' [1]

During 1924 Ellis was also occupied in preparing a volume of *Sonnets with Folk Songs from the Spanish*. The sonnets were all products of his youth. About a dozen of them had been left incomplete, usually in the octet, as he was accustomed, after planning a sonnet, to begin at the end and work backwards. He now added the necessary lines, as much in the original spirit as possible, and put the whole group forward as 'an archæological record, interesting apart from any technical qualities or the absence of it, the record of personal experiences in the evolution of an individual person's spirit.' One of the newly finished sonnets, 'Epilogue,' is perhaps Ellis's best achievement as a poet, as it is also a rather splendid epigraph for his career.

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 22.

I have seen the form of Life, her face was mine;
She whispered to me words of heavenly mirth;
She laid my head between her breasts' wide girth;
All round about me were her limbs that shine;
She pressed for me the stream of milk divine
(That no lips twice shall find of equal worth);
And clasped me once, and flung me across the earth,
Drunk with that music, made with that new wine.

A little while to-day I am the cry
Of pulses, that from Life within me beat,
To tell of things that come, of things that die.
I pray you hear, the day is passing by,
And soon my song ends, soon I go to meet
The silence in the shadow of Life's feet.

The little Spanish folk songs, 'coplas,' Ellis had been translating at odd moments, over a period of twenty-five years, from the coast of Cornwall to Mount Lycabettos in Greece. Their sharp, quick beauty had haunted him since his first trip to Spain. They were the sure, spontaneous wisdom of an unsophisticated people. It is practically impossible to render them in another language, and Ellis's versions are not notably successful, yet they are full of charm as his latest obeisance to one of his adopted countries.

At Cornwall, in the last week of 1926, Ellis put the finishing touches on an essay concerning marriage, which will be the final part of a seventh volume of the *Studies, Eonism and Supplementary Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. All of the other chapters have been previously published, including 'The Mechanisms of Sexual Deviation,' 'Eonism, A Case of Sexo-Æsthetic Inversion,' 'The Synthesis of Dreams,' and 'The Conception of Narcissism.' (By the term 'eonism,' which he invented, Ellis means the tendency, 'outside the specifically sexual emotions,' for men to possess the tastes of women and women those of men.)

As a large part of Ellis's work has been concerned more or less directly with the problem of marriage, his concluding opinions on that critical subject are especially significant. He notes first the general tendency to increase the legal facilities for divorce. The difficulties of mutual adjustment are so great that 'it seems to some that a marriage should not be made binding unless there has been a preliminary stage of noviciate, sufficiently intimate to ensure mutual knowledge. . . . The natural goal, already beginning to be reached here and there, is obviously divorce by mutual consent, provided of course that no rights of the parties themselves or of the children are injured, for it would seem to be logical that the exit from marriage should not be made more difficult than the entrance. . . . It is more likely that the movement for simplifying divorce will not proceed rapidly enough. That is where the opportunity arises for the formation of such non-legal unions as, under the name of "companionate," have been mentioned. Such unions are already numerous. What we need of course is socially to recognise them as worthy. . . . The world is beginning to see that it is impossible to lay too light a legal hand on marriage and equally impossible to be too rigidly severe in regard to procreation.'

Ellis is in much sympathy with the Catholic conception of marriage, which begins in a sacrament at which the priest is only a witness, and leads to a religious state of life in which sexual union is *only one* of the bonds. The Protestant conception, largely a revolt against the too binding Catholic view, is, says Ellis, 'in its essence secular and in its popular atmosphere romantic. That is to say, it is narrowed down to a kind of legal sex-contract which is held to be sufficiently sanctified by the promise of exclusive and permanent

mutual love. Such a promise in the union of any couple, even of the most devoted lovers, is a transparent fiction which can never be kept, and if it is taken seriously as the foundation of marriage it inevitably casts a drop of poison, if not a fatal dose into the marital cup. It is certainly within the power of every sane and honest husband and wife to avoid having actual sex intercourse with other persons and it is unnecessary to say that a vast number of husbands and wives have avoided it. But there is a large gradation of acts short of that final act which permit the intimate expressions of love, so intimate that they have often sufficed to furnish adequate legal evidence of adultery.

'There is no doubt about this: the promise of mutual exclusive and everlasting love is a promise that cannot be kept and should not be made. It cannot form a permanent basis of marriage, and good marriages subsist by being shifted to other foundations. Yet there has been a general conspiracy not merely to preserve this fiction but to put it at the front as the primary condition for marriage. "Promise that you will never love any one but me." Lovers are not taught to look upon the demand as wrong and silly. They are expected to make it; and expected to accept it. If they fail to do so the general feeling has been that this is not likely to be a "happy marriage."'

Ellis would say with Keyserling that 'marriage is not only a sexual bond but also a personal bond. . . . We cannot therefore confine it within the sphere of morals and regard the existence of a sexual rupture as an adequate cause for divorce. . . . Marriage is essentially rather to be termed a tragic condition than a happy condition. It is by the intensity of life it produces that its success must be measured and even its ultimate happiness. Unhappily married people more

rarely harm their souls than those who are happily married.' [1]

As the traditional attitude toward adultery is being modified by the increasing facilities for divorce, Ellis also believes that jealousy, what Mrs. Ellis called 'mental cannibalism,' may become a less prevalent phenomenon. 'The preliminary vow of everlasting and exclusive mutual fidelity at the outset rendered difficult for all, and for many impossible, the exercise of a quality which is even more necessary at the foundation of marriage than love itself: the quality of sincerity. . . . The initial vow needs to be so enlarged that its essence can be summed up in erotic comradeship. That may well include an exclusive mutual erotic attraction, if, and in so far as, that proves possible. But it goes beyond such limited devotion; it means that the two lovers so love each other, and so trust each other, that it is natural and instinctive to tell each other of their feelings towards other persons. They are able to share in sympathy, if not actually, the new affections that come into their lives, and thereby to increase and to affirm their affection for each other. Under such conditions, jealousy, in well-proportioned natures, even if it arises, can do no hurt, and even the ground for it to arise is unlikely to be found, for where the new affection is seen and acknowledged at the outset the lovers are able to control and guide it together, and keep it within the established bounds of their own love. . . . Marriage, however convenient it may still remain, is without any high mission unless it brings those who contract it into many-sided contact with the greater world, and the contact cannot be real and intimate if it excludes at the outset the possibility of other relationships that are affectionate.'

[1] Cf. *The Book of Marriage.*

In conclusion Ellis says:

'That it should have been given to our time to place marriage on a sound foundation is not, for me at all events, any matter for surprise. At the outset of my career it seemed to me that the age-long problem of the place in life of the impulse of sex had at last been reached by Man in his course and that it was especially set before our own age at length to solve it. Now, nearly half a century later, I would rejoice that the advance made has even gone beyond my dreams, and not feel called upon to grieve over any respectable idols of the past now falling in the dust.

'For my own part, notwithstanding various archæological interests, I find it tedious to be among those who are several centuries behind their times; it has amused me more to share the disdain bestowed upon those who are a little in front. — I may be permitted, as I depart, to make this one personal observation.' [1]

On finishing this discourse Ellis did not pause to rest, but plunged, characteristically, the same day, into an article on William Shenstone,[2] a curious eighteenth-century figure who was not fitted for 'the arduous vocation of marriage.' In a few thousand words Ellis recovered the quiet, indolent bachelor who was famous for his 'natural gardens,' anticipated much of the romantic movement and wrote perfect 'fragments' which are almost completely neglected. It is all done with a charm and deftness that recalls the period of *Affirmations*, although Shenstone demanded much less colorful treatment than the characters of that book. After reading such an essay, a literary person might well regret that Ellis has had to give so much time to

[1] These passages are quoted from the original manuscript, which was slightly altered before going to press.

[2] Published in *The Dial*, May, 1927; also as introduction to a volume of Shenstone's prose, *Men and Manners*.

science, as a distinguished biologist has recently regretted that Ellis has seen fit to give so much time to literature. Looking at the matter in perspective, however, it seems that Ellis's value to each province has been largely the result of his interest in the other.

The spring of 1927 found him working on another rather obscure figure of the eighteenth century, the Baron de Besenval, who has been chiefly known for his exceedingly candid *Mémoires*. Of them Ellis first learned during his Australian days, in the pages of Stendhal, and read them a few years later with the intense satisfaction that he has always found in such intimately human books, whether by Pepys, Brantôme, Tallement des Reaux or Saint-Simon. But it was only recently that Ellis became acquainted with Besenval's *Contes*, for the English translation of which he wrote his scholarly introduction. Here again one is struck by his familiarity with diverse French authors such as Crébillon, Marivaux and Laclos, whom he regards as superb 'moralists,' transforming into art the crucial problems which the nineteenth century so stolidly ignored.

The papers on Shenstone and Besenval are among Ellis's best 'Introductions.' Out of kindness of heart he has written several others of much less distinction. Lately he has made up his mind to abandon the habit, but it is probable that in the future he will yield more than once to earnest requests for prefatory notes. This is all a part of Ellis's unusual talent for drawing attention to old authors who have been neglected, or new authors who are not yet known. Thus he made Ibsen accessible in a popular edition. He introduced Casanova, Nietzsche and Freud to English readers. He suggested the translation of Bloch's *Sexual Life of Our Time*. He has referred again and again to Jules de

Gaultier. He commented, in 1917, on the death of José Enrique Rodó, the outstanding South American essayist. He reviewed Vaihinger's work in a popular weekly, four years before the English version appeared. He wrote the introduction to Maurice Parmelee's *New Gymnosophy* and is friendly with the highly unorthodox Contact Press of Paris.

Yet these acts of generosity do not mean that Ellis is a soft and simpering lover of mankind in general. On the contrary, he is apt to agree with Jesus' description of mankind as 'a generation of vipers,' but he does not think it wise or necessary to publish that opinion. He simply prefers to avoid contact with the crowd. 'I do not like drinking at those pools which are turbid from the hoofs of my fellow creatures; when I cannot get there before the others I like to wait until a considerable time after they have left.' To-day he has lost interest in birth control because it has become the possession of the crowd. He detests popularity, both from taste and on principle, and has always rejected the attempt of journalists, publishers and others to thrust him into the path that leads to 'popular success.' What does always delight him is the evidence that specific individuals have appreciated, or been helped by, his work.

To individuals, whom he meets alone almost invariably, rarely in groups of even two or three, Ellis gives an enormous amount of his valuable time, perhaps an excessive amount. Closest to him are a few intelligent women who visit him frequently and with whom he corresponds regularly. Then there is a wider circle of good friends and scientific colleagues, whom he sees occasionally or keeps in touch with by letter. (Some of his warmest friendships have been entirely carried on by writing, and he has never met Jules de

Gaultier, Freud or the late F. A. Davis, his publisher.) Finally, there is that small army of people who go to him out of sincere affection, or to tell him their troubles, or to satisfy their more or less admirable curiosity. His correspondence, large in the nineties, has become vast with the years, but he still keeps up with it, without a stenographer or the use of a typewriter. He may send a detailed opinion on some case in psychopathology, and a page to some worshipful schoolboy. A gentleman in India may write to inquire why a cat had a second lot of kittens within a few weeks, and some one else may ask Ellis to apologize to an entire nation because of some factual statement in one of his volumes. And these answers are requested not in pairs but in scores! Ellis would not be Ellis if his replies were not ordinarily prompt. It is a pity, for thus he wastes much of his energy and cannot do himself justice; he has not time to make most of the letters detailed, and he has no reason to make them really personal or confidential. He has said that he has never done an unselfish thing in his life, but Mrs. Ellis saw a trace of both drudgery and unselfishness in his attitude to his voluminous correspondence. Yet, in all these ways, Ellis, the quiet recluse, who has no dress suit, and who goes to no parties, banquets or balls, makes his innumerable contacts with the human world.

To-day, at sixty-nine, he is living out a beautiful old age, much beloved, active, care-free, understood, a sage who realizes that he has come into his own. He is in better health than he was a few years ago. He walks with elastic step, and his complexion is clear and ruddy, as he still works in the open air. Whether bent over a book in the British Museum, stretched out on a couch in his study, or strolling along a country lane, he

is a magnificent-looking person who seems to be a part of all that he has met. It is an unforgettable impression which those who know him try to suggest by some contrasting set of terms, such as Christ and faun, Stoic and Epicurean, centaur and saint, combined in exquisite harmony. 'The personality of Havelock Ellis,' says Edward Carpenter, 'is that of a student, thoughtful, preoccupied, bookish, deliberate; yet unlike most students he has a sort of grand air of Nature about him — a fine free head and figure as of some great god Pan, with distant relations among the Satyrs.'

Of recent portraits Ellis himself prefers that at the beginning of this chapter, although it is frankly disliked by some of his friends, including the photographer, John Trevor. Ellis simply says: 'It seems the *me* I myself recognise; it is like how I feel.' It is not the face of a local man, but of one who belongs to the cosmos. Those distance-looking eyes bespeak a spacious mind.

His ways of life have changed little since 1891. He continues to spend the spring and fall in London, the winter by the sea, and the summer in some interior county. The home which contains his worldly possessions is a plain flat of four rooms with kitchen attached, in Brixton, far enough from the centre of London to be economical as well as peaceful. A maid comes in to clean twice a week, but otherwise he takes care of it himself and prepares most of his meals there. Steamed chicken, roasts, spaghetti, salads, custards and puddings, from the hands of this modern Epicurus, are subjects for eloquence among his more fortunate friends. He serves a course dinner, accompanied by claret or Burgundy, with the same artistry that he writes an essay.

The small living-room of the flat, which is also his study, overflows with books and papers; on the walls are two or three original pictures of ultra-modern design, several photographs of friends, and above the fireplace a large Vermeer color print. In the dining-room, two high cupboards are crowded with notes and manuscripts. Ellis has little gift for throwing things away, and he has accumulated quantities of material for unwritten articles, great masses of letters and long files of periodicals. Across from the room often occupied by Mrs. Ellis when she was in London during her latter years, is Ellis's bare Spartan bedroom, entirely unadorned except for ten small pictures in a corner, next to the window. At the top, Goethe, the human being *par excellence*, is just above Flaubert, indefatigable artist, and Edward Carpenter, prophet and friend. Francis Galton, statistician, eugenist and amateur of genius, is placed beside Walt Whitman, cosmic singer. Then the faces of five women: Mrs. Havelock Ellis, Olive Schreiner, Margaret Sanger and two others living, not known to the general public. As a man is what he finally loves, that little gallery epitomizes the leading themes of Ellis's life.

'If it were permitted me to revisit the earth for a brief period every year,' mused Ellis one morning in June, 1920, 'I would desire it to be the region around London, where I was born, where, I suppose, more of my life has been spent than elsewhere, and I would have the time to be about the first week in June.

'That week, it seems to me, is most likely to be, in this climate, the fairest week of the year. Then the days are warm, and yet it is delicious to lie in the sun; the trees are in full leaf, which still has not lost its virginal freshness, nor has wild music ceased to burden every bough; the shy and frail flowers of spring —

tremulous with fear of keen winds and falling snows — are passed away; it is the season when the stellaria, which has ever been my flower among wild flowers, has formed its perfect goblet of fine texture, while the rich flowers of strong growth are everywhere opening with daring confidence in a summer to come. All is ecstasy.

'So I meditate as I wander through the lanes and meadows of this unfamiliar remote corner of a near and familiar land, and gaze with rapture at the first full-blown wild rose in the hedge, so exquisitely fragile, so serenely self-assured.' [1]

Last summer, as during the two previous summers, Ellis lived in a seventeenth-century cottage, set on a green hill in Buckinghamshire, not far from Oxford. In a letter to a friend he wrote, late in July: 'The white lilies have been a great joy this year, some 40 stems and up to 23 flowers and buds on a stem. And the raspberries have never seemed so fine, and seem inexhaustibly abundant. Also the gooseberries, while the apple-trees are laden. And half a pound of Epsom salts last year to a greengage tree, as prescribed by Barker Smith, and another half pound to a pear-tree, have produced brilliant results, the pear-tree never having borne before, and the greengage never having done so well.'

He cannot thoroughly enjoy flowers, said James Hinton, who cannot look frankly on the facts of sex. As a lover of flowers, Ellis has come to the sexual world of men and women. He has surveyed that world more wisely than any one else and he has presented his observations in masterly order. Yet it is not a vast collection of details, however well classified, that is his greatest contribution to contemporary civilization.

[1] *Impressions and Comments*, III, 17–18.

Primarily, he has given us a new perspective, a decent way of looking at the poisoned and slandered heart of experience. He has seen that the most exotic anomalies are marvellously human, not to be blindly dismissed as 'perverse' or 'unnatural.' He has traced to their primordial roots the finest dreams and desires, without degrading them. He has, to an immeasurable degree, taken the leer out of love's language. In dealing with clouded tabooed questions, it is easy to be seductive or terrifying or anæmically neutral. It is easy to be a preacher or a procurer, to win crude condemnation or approval. It is not easy to be persistently and passionately curious, to compel sympathetic understanding in a realm of antique shadows and imagined monsters. That is the method as well as the magic of Havelock Ellis. Those who know him, those who read him, acquire not only new facts but a new vision.

Born in 1859, *Anno Darwini*, Ellis is peculiarly a child of his age, and yet peculiarly devoid of its most characteristic afflictions, summed up in *The Waste Land*, the desiccated epic of our time. He is not bewildered about religion, overawed by science and obsessed with sex. He is not made cynical by man's animal origin and dusty end. He is not peevish, bitter, and ashamed to be at peace. He is not bowed down before

> 'A heap of broken images, where the sun beats
> And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
> And the dry stone no sound of water.'

Fifty years ago, under the grim shea-oaks beside Sparkes Creek, he passed beyond the dilemmas and antitheses which have enfeebled the modern mind. He passed from an alien world to the World as Beauty, as a Living Whole which no doctrine of mechanism or logical analysis can destroy. Since then he has walked

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his serene path alone, not so much an eclectic who puts things imperfectly together as a mystic who cannot see things apart; not so much a descendant of Goethe as a more articulate Blake, who has blended the fires within his soul and made his work a genuine Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

FINIS

APPENDIX A

COMMONPLACE BOOKS, 1875–1885

THE six volumes of Ellis's Commonplace Books contain quotations from the bulk of his general reading (exclusive of poetry and fiction) between his sixteenth and twenty-sixth years. There are 1052 separate passages, varying in length from a few lines to a thousand or more words, with only a few annotations by Ellis himself. Occasionally the source of the quotation is not given. The Commonplace Books are a kind of mental autobiography of the most critical decade of Ellis's life, and for that reason the complete list of their contents is here set down in his original language — without, of course, the corresponding quotations which would fill a large printed volume. For the sake of clarity, the typographical style has been made somewhat more uniform, but the occasional slips in numbering have been retained.

I

COMMONPLACE BOOK

H. H. ELLIS

1875–1877

1. Difference in religious opinions. Bacon on (*Essays:* 'Of Vanity in Religion')
2. Atheism and superstition. Bacon on (ibid.)
3. Words obsolete or used in an obsolete sense by Bacon. (*Essays: Advancement of Learning*)
4. Woman in France. Taine on (*Notes sur l'Angleterre*)
5. English and French Women. Taine on (ibid.)
6. English education. Taine on (ibid.)
7. English and Hebrew. Taine on (ibid.)
8. Common Prayer Book. Taine on (ibid.)
9. Street preaching. Taine on (ibid.)
10. 'Punch.' Taine on (ibid.)
11. Shakespeare acted. Taine on (ibid.)
12. English mind. Taine on (ibid.)
13. Psychology in England. Taine on (ibid.)
14. English humor. Taine on (ibid.)
15. English humor. Taine on (ibid.)
16. Turner's latter style. Taine on (ibid.)
17. St. Paul. 'ce laid petit juif.' (Renan)

18. English art, character, poetry. Taine on (*Notes sur l'Angleterre*)
19. E. B. Browning's 'Aurora Leigh.' Taine on (ibid.)
20. Characteristics of England and France. Taine on (ibid.)
21. Buddha (Max Müller's *Chips from a German Workshop*, I)
22. Creation. Elohistic and Jehovistic account of the (from a lecture delivered at Melbourne by Dr. ——)
23. Patriarchs. Age of Hebrew
25. Modified Universalism of the Fathers (Max Müller)
26. Woman's sphere. Dr. Nichols on (*Human Physiology*)
27. Immortality of the soul. Dugwald Stewart on (*Moral Philosophy*)
28. J. H. Newman on Dogma (*Apologia*)
29. Newman's Religious History (ibid.)
30. Religious doubt. J. H. Newman on (ibid.)
31. Poetry. J. H. Newman on classic (*Grammar of Assent*)
32. Gibbon's five causes (*Grammar of Assent*)
33. Grace *in opere operato* (*Anglican Difficulties*)
34. Poetry. J. H. Newman on (*Essays Critical and Historical*, II)
35. The Fathers. J. H. Newman on (*Anglican Difficulties*)
36. Church of Rome. Newman on (*Discourses to Mixed Congregations*)
37. The Mass. Newman on (*Loss and Gain*)
38. Benediction. J. H. Newman on (*Present Position of Catholics*)
39. Confession. J. H. Newman on (ibid.)
40. Miracles of saints. (*Present Position of Catholics*)
41. Virgin Mary. Earliest apparition of (*Anglican Difficulties*)
42. Thomas's doubt ('All the foregoing extracted from the *Characteristics from the Writings of J. H. Newman*, by Samuel Lily, 1875')
43. Argument for immortality, from aspiration, futile (Thomas Browne: *Moral Philosophy*)
44. Bishop Butler and evolution (G. Combe in note to *Constitution of Man*)
45. Sexual ignorance. Evils of (G. Combe: *Constitution of Man*, V)
46. Religious Sabbath. Non-observance of (sermon by J. W. Robertson)
47. Cicero's 'De Senectute' (quotation in Latin)
48. Milton's religious views (Channing's essay on Milton)
49. Corporal Presence (Henry Soames: *The Anglo-Saxon Church; its History, Revenues and General Character*)
50. Gregory the Great (ibid.)
51. Gregory. Bede on (ibid.)
52. Archbishop Theodore (ibid.)
53. Saint Wilfred (ibid.)
54. Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury (ibid.)

55. Alcuin (ibid.)
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60. Edwy. King (ibid.)
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62. Guthlac (ibid.)
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64. Dunstan (ibid.)
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66. Carlyle's account of first human recognition (*Life of Stirling*)
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68. Tragedy (ibid.)
69. Comedy. Morality of (ibid.)
70. (note by translator of Schlegel)
71. Art. Ancient and modern (Schlegel's *Dramatic Literature*)
72. Lope de Vega (ibid.)
73. Spanish dramatic literature (ibid.)
74. Chorus. The Greek (ibid.)
75. Beauty. Winckelmann on (ibid.)
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77. Epos and tragedy (ibid.)
78. Alfieri (ibid.)
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80. Fletcher's 'Faithful Shepherdess' (ibid.)
81. Schiller. Schlegel on (ibid.)
82. Cervantes (Ticknor's *Spanish Literature*)
83. Calderon (Ticknor's *Spanish Literature*)
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90. Fate and free-will (ibid.)
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95. Good and evil (ibid.)
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99. St. François de Sales (ibid.)
100. Leigh Hunt on Keats (ibid.)

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102. Milan. Tennyson on
103. Musset, Hugo and Merimée. Swinburne on (*Essays and Studies*)
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105. John Ford. Swinburne on (ibid.)
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229. Botticelli. Sandro (Symonds: *Renaissance in Italy*)
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233. Lessing's 'Nathan.' Strauss on (*The Old Faith and the New*)
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302. Shelley. Beyle on (ibid.)
303. Kock. Paul de (*Nouvelle Biographie Générale*)
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305. Population in New South Wales. (pamphlet)
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334. 'Certains engins.' Brantôme on (ibid.)
335. Prostitutes in the 17th century. Brantôme on (ibid.)
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337. Morals in French court in the 17th century. Brantôme on (ibid.)
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351. Claudian. Coleridge on (ibid.)
352. Origen. Coleridge on (ibid.)
353. God. Coleridge on proving (ibid.)
354. Schiller's versification. Coleridge on (ibid.)
355. Sabbath. Coleridge on the (ibid.)
356. Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progess.' Coleridge on (ibid.)
357. Rubens. Coleridge on (ibid.)
358. 'We do not win Heaven by logic.' (ibid.)
359. Defoe's irony. Coleridge on (ibid.)
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361. Rabelais. Coleridge on (ibid.)
362. Christianity. Coleridge on proofs of (ibid.)
363. Claude and Teniers. Coleridge on (ibid.)
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365. Hamlet. Coleridge on (ibid.)
366. Shakespeare's Sonnets. Coleridge on (ibid.)
367. German language. Coleridge on the (ibid.)
368. German poetry. Coleridge on (ibid.)
368. Wieland. Coleridge on (ibid.)

II

HENRY H. ELLIS

SPARKES CREEK

SCONE

N. S. W.

1877–1880

369. H. T. Buckle's indifference to music; loss of interest in art and Nature (*Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works*, 3 vols.)
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371. Women's service to science. Buckle on (ibid.)
372. Elizabeth's toleration. Buckle on (ibid.)
373. Clergy in Elizabeth's reign. Buckle on (ibid.)
374. Fecundity not increased by fish or potato diet (ibid.)
375. Population. Buckle on (ibid.)
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379. Voltaire. Buckle on (ibid.)
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384. Puberty of women in Asia, Africa, etc. (ibid.)
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515. Spinoza and Coleridge (Crabb Robinson's *Diary*)
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551. St. Columba (ibid.)
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641. Heine's irony (ibid.)
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643. Heine's morality (ibid.)
644. Heine and Republicanism (ibid.)
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738 Petrus Cristus (ibid.)
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845. Sienese art (ibid.)
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851a. Titian (ibid.)
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862. Love. Edith Simcox on (*Episodes in the Lives of Men, Women and Lovers*)
863. 'Nor loved they life or love for death's sake less,
Nor feared they death for love's or life's sake more.'
— Swinburne
864. On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot (Swinburne's sonnet)
865. Thomas Dekker. Swinburne on (sonnet)
866. Children. Swinburne on
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868. Sappho (ibid.)
869. Aristophanes. Symonds on (ibid.)
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917. D. G. Rossetti. Sharp on (*A Record and a Study of D. G. Rossetti*)
918. Roman Cameos, by Emil Gebhart
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923. Fynes Moryson's Itinerary
924. Whitman. Dowden on (*Academy*, Sept., 1883)
925. Marriage. Luther on (bibliographical note)
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928. Nakedness. Socrates on (Plato's *Republic*)
929. History of European Morals, by W. H. Lecky
930. Suicide in Greece and Italy (ibid.)
931. Aulus Gellius (ibid.)
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935. The ascetic movement (ibid.)

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945. Maudsley's Body and Mind
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947. Adamites in England (ibid.)
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995. Lacroix. Paul ('Le Bibliophile Jacob')
995. Prostitution
996. Théroigne de Méricourt. The Goncourts on (*Portraits intimes du XVIIIe siècle*)
997. Taine. Zola on
998. Wagner. Hueffer on
999. Lassalle (bibliographical note)

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1001. George Eliot on morality (a letter of 1877)
1002. George Eliot to Burne-Jones
1003. Keats to Fanny Brawne
1004. Sir Thomas Browne's Religion Medici
1005. Theologia Germanica. Schopenhauer on (Helen Zimmern: *Life of Arthur Schopenhauer*)
1006. Nakedness and baptism (Cunningham's *Growth of the Church*)
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1010. The Life of Kant, by J. Stuckenberg (Eng. trans.)

1011. Women. Kant on (ibid.)
1012. The Religions of China, by James Legge
1013. The Evolution of Morality, by E. S. Wake
1014. Transmigration of souls. Bartholemy Saint-Hilaire (ibid.)
1015. Matter: *Histoire Critique du Gnosticisme*
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